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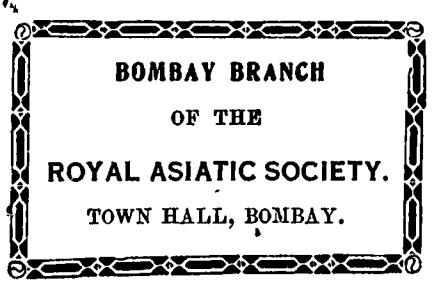

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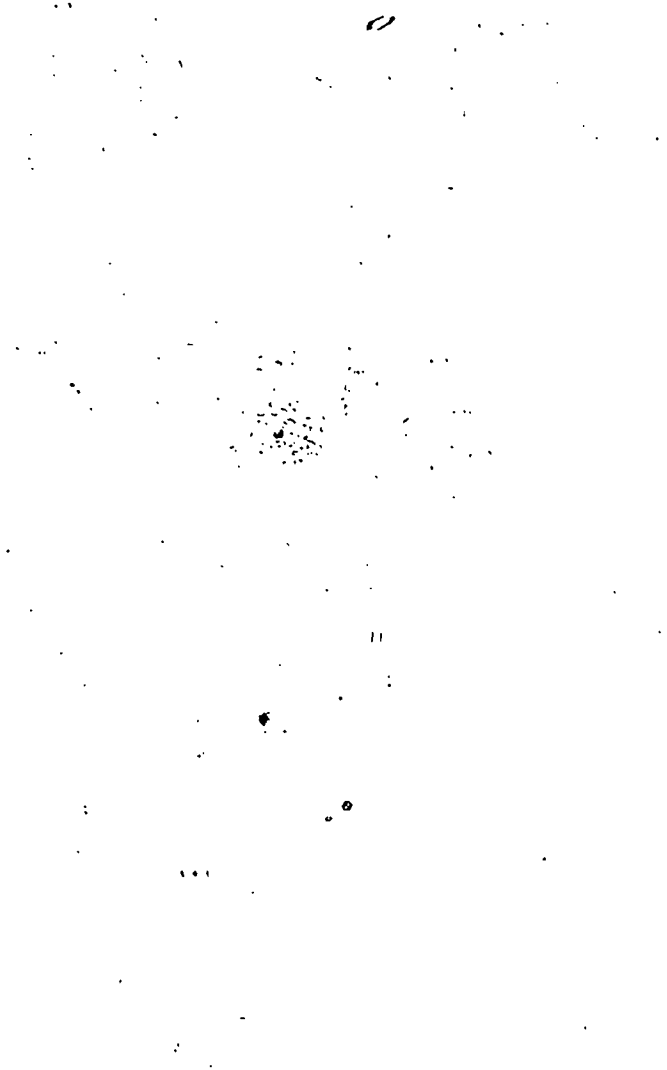

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"J'ai dit, je suis, je serai jusqu'au tombeau l'homme de la liber
ublique, l'homme de la constitution. Malheur aux ordres privilégi
s finiront, mais le peuple est eternel."

Mirabeau

MIRABEAU'S LETTERS,

DURING

HIS RESIDENCE IN ENGLAND;

WITH

Anecdotes, Maxims, &c.

85064

NOW FIRST TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

ON THE

LIFE, WRITINGS, CONDUCT, AND CHARACTER,

OF THE AUTHOR.

X·i·21

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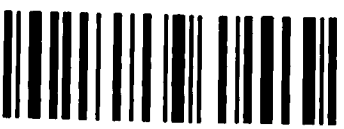

PREFACE.

MORE than forty years having elapsed since the death of MIRABEAU, it may be thought extraordinary that these "Letters" should only now, for the first time, see the light. The history of their slumber is brief.

In the year 1806, the translator was residing in Brussels. At that period, the fashion of collecting autographs was extremely prevalent, especially amongst ladies. A particular friend of the translator's, Madame de Bathe,* requested Madame Guilleminot, the sister-in-law of the present General Guilleminot, to assist her in

* La Comtesse de Bathe, sister of Sir James de Bathe, Bart. She enjoyed the title of Countess, in consequence of her being a *Chanoinesse* of Malta.

her collection. Her husband, in consequence, applied to one of the sisters of Napoleon Buonaparte; that princess mentioned the application to Cambaceres, the Chancellor of the Empire; and, under his direction, the Keeper of the Archives was instructed to forward as many autograph letters as might be at his disposal to Brussels. Between two and three thousand letters, written by celebrated men of the Revolution, were accordingly dispatched. The translator was present on their arrival. Madame de Bathe requested him to select those which might appear the most interesting. Having done so, he was allowed to transcribe such as he chose, and also to submit the originals to the inspection of several of his friends.

The Letters of Mirabeau, here presented, are only a portion of those which he transcribed. From several hundreds of others, he has two more volumes, of interest not inferior to the present, now in preparation. Specimens of these, from Marat, and Beaumarchais, the author of "*Figaro*," &c., were inserted in *The Monthly Magazine* for May last.

The letters, sent to Brussels, had been written principally between the year 1783, the period of the peace, and 1793. Most of them had passed through the *Bureau Noir;* and the inspectors, charged to open, and afterwards forward them to their respective addresses, had either neglected the latter part of their duty, or the letters had been seized at the residences of individuals arrested during the horrors of the revolution.

Most of Mirabeau's letters, here given, were in his own hand-writing; but some of them had been copied by Adam, his secretary, who succeeded Hardy—the man whose trial at the Old Bailey is inserted in the first of these volumes. It is not known to whom they had been written; for, having been collected, either by Mirabeau or Adam, and partially arranged, with a view to their publication, the envelopes had been destroyed, or, in many instances, they had never had any, having been sent through private hands, or in parcels, as might best suit the convenience of the writer.

Some of the "Maxims," &c., may possibly have appeared before, anonymously,

but as they were all found in the handwriting of Mirabeau, scarcely a doubt can be entertained of their being exclusively his.

Were it not that the internal evidence of the genuineness of these letters is more than sufficient, the translator might refer for corroborating testimony to his friends, General Murray, Admiral S. Miller, Baron Beytz, Mr. Charles Greenwood, the Hon. Mr. Dillon, &c.; also, to the Prince d'Aremberg, an intimate friend of Mirabeau's, who has in his possession a great number of original unpublished MSS., productions of that extraordinary man.

If requisite, a variety of explanatory details might be entered into upon the subject; but enough, it is presumed, has been said.

The editor might also have supplied a copious variety of notes. Of them, however, excepting for the purpose of illustration, he has thought it best to be sparing. Let every reader make his own comment.

For the opinions promulgated in these Letters, all responsibility is disclaimed, on the part of both translator and editor.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

OF THE

LIFE, WRITINGS, CONDUCT, AND CHARACTER OF MIRABEAU.

It is a trite remark, that "man is the creature of circumstance;" and in no one has this adage been more strikingly exemplified than in Mirabeau—Honorè Gabriel Riquetti, Comte de Mirabeau, unquestionably the most distinguished hero of the earlier periods of the French Revolution.

Yet, man is not *merely* the creature of circumstance—not *merely* the creature of education. He comes into the world with certain dispositions—*predispositions*, are they to be termed?—physical and mental,* each influencing and acting upon,

---

* Yes, *physical* AND *mental*; for, unless we fall implicitly into the creed of the phrenologists, that mind is purely the result of organisation, it is necessary to preserve the distinction.

each stimulating or repressing the other; and these predispositions, physical and mental, all liable to be influenced and acted upon, stimulated or repressed, for good or for evil, by impinging events.

Of the truth of this, Mirabeau presents a forcible illustration. He was born, as his biographers inform us, with a vigorous constitution—with a temperament of fire—with faculties the most energetic—with passions impetuous and fermenting, equally powerful to promote the happiness or create the misery of his fellows, according to the direction of circumstances.

And Mirabeau was unfortunate in his education. His character was misunderstood, not only by his father, misnomered *The Friend of Man*, but by those to whom his elementary instruction was confided. His amiable propensities were not fostered—they experienced no cheering, salutary stimulus; his evil ones were exacerbated. Above all, his tutors, by their misapprehension of his nature, failed to instil into his mind that most desirable, that most important, of all intellectual possessions, *a fixedness of principle.* Throughout his life, Mirabeau had no fixed principles: he was the child of impulse; constantly vacillating; and, like a feather, subject to be wafted in any direction, by the breath of the moment.

Unfortunate, too, with respect to the gifts of mammon, he acquired vices apparently foreign to his natural character. Having felt the want of money—of money to nurture his extravagance—he became little scrupulous by what means his purse might be replenished. This was one of the numerous evils which, in his case, resulted from the absence of fixed principles—of a high-toned sense of honour. His genius was all-commanding; but the glory of its fire was dimmed by sensuality, by a sordid thirst for gain. He was prodigal, but not generous. He was ambitious; but his ambition was unaccompanied by greatness, by nobleness of soul.

It was justly observed, by a late able writer, that, "had Mirabeau's integrity being equal to his talents, the monarchy had never been reduced to that state of degradation from which it was, at last, his intention to extricate it. With his commanding force of eloquence, and with the strength of his intellectual powers, he might have arrested the revolutionary torrent in its course; he might have kept the States General within the strict line of their duty; and, while he had clipped the wings of despotism, he might have fixed the regal authority upon a firm and permanent basis. But Mirabeau was profligate, vicious, and unprincipled; avarice

and ambition were the predominant features in his character; the former, however, was not with him the medium of accumulation, but, like the latter, the instrument and the means of enjoyment. He was a sensualist, and a voluptuary; corrupt in principle, and licentious from habit. Still, even his vices might have been rendered instrumental, in the hands of an able statesman, to the preservation of the monarchy. And had the Marquis de Bouillè been minister, instead of Necker, at the commencement of the revolution, or at the first meeting of the States General, Mirabeau might have become the advocate of Louis the Sixteenth, and the French monarchy might have been saved." *

It is not here intended to write a *Life of Mirabeau*. Duly to perform such a task would require a twelvemonth's labour and research, embodied in at least two or three volumes equal in size to the present. In this very brief notice, the writer's aim is simply, by a few slight touches, to offer a graphic portrait of his character;—to exhibit its more prominent features in a literary, moral, and political light.

Mirabeau's family was of Italian origin. His

* Gifford's *Life of Pitt*, vol. III. page 90.

Mirabeau. At the age of fourteen, he was familiar with the classics, and animated with the most lively desire for the acquisition of knowledge. To the modern languages, poetry, and the fine arts, he was especially devoted. Subjected to a wiser course of mental cultivation, much of the evil of his after-life might have been prevented. The severity, the undue rigour which he experienced at home, ruffled and soured, disgusted and exasperated his spirit. Hardly is it to be wondered at, that, whilst yet a stripling, his character was daring and ungovernable—that he became addicted to almost every irregularity. His father, who had destined him for the profession of arms, placed him at the military school. There he for two years successfully studied the mathematics, under the celebrated Lagrange.

Already panting for fame—his mind deeply imbued with a love of poetry and the arts—he published an *éloge* on the great Condé, and some pieces in verse. His aims at elocutionary power—his desire to be an orator—were also developed at an early period. A friend took him by surprise one day in his chamber, whilst he was declaiming with great heat and energy. "What! are you playing the part of Demosthenes?" "And why not,"

replied Mirabeau; "perhaps a day may come when the States-General will exist in France!"

It may almost be said, that the boy spoke with the tongue of inspiration, and in the spirit of prophecy.

At the age of seventeen, he entered the cavalry, as a volunteer. In this novel scene, his habits of study, and the avidity with which he read every work that came in his way, relating to the military art, drew upon him the ridicule of the officers. Between him and his father, the most irreconcileable differences existed—parent and child seemed to be equally violent. The enemies of the latter have gone so far as to accuse him of designs of parricide. In consequence, as it would appear, of some love affair of Mirabeau's, which made a noise at the time, his father was so enraged, that he procured a *lettre de cachet* against him, and caused him to be closely confined in the Isle of Rhé for two years. Indeed, it was only by the urgent remonstrances of his friends, that this domestic tyrant was induced to abandon the unnatural project of exiling his son to one of the Dutch settlements in India. It is scarcely too harsh an inference, that he anticipated, through the agency of a pestilential climate, the termination of his paternal cares.

On his liberation, Mirabeau obtained a commission in a dragoon regiment, and served two years in Corsica. Having been rewarded with the brevet rank of captain, he applied to his father to purchase him a company in the regiment; when he received this singular and heartless reply—"*Que les Bayard et les Duguesclin n'avaient pas procédé ainsi.*" In consequence, he relinquished a profession which he loved, and to which he had devoted years of study and of service.

On the reduction of Corsica, he took up his pen to sketch a picture of the oppression to which the unfortunate Genoese had been subjected, under the dominion of France. This work—imperfect in its nature, but glowing with energy and truth—he presented to his father, by whom it was destroyed.

Returning to France, and still indulging a hope to conciliate his amiable parent, he consented to bury himself, as it were, for a time, in the Limousin, where he found employment in improving the land, and in settling the litigated affairs of the estate.

Such obscure labours were ill-suited to his genius. He therefore, in 1771, returned to Paris, against the will of the Marquis, his father, with whom he found all remonstrance unavailable. His

contempt for the charlatanism of the economists, and his violent opposition to the ministerial despotism of Maupeon and Terray, widened, if possible, the breach between him and his father, who, with all his pretended enthusiasm in the cause of liberty, was a worshipper of men in power.

In Paris, Mirabeau is said to have revelled in every extravagance, and to have involved himself in very serious difficulties.

At Aix, in Provence, Mirabeau, in 1772, became acquainted with a young and beautiful woman—Mademoiselle Emilie de Marignane, the heiress of an extremely opulent family. He demanded her in marriage; but there were obstacles in the way—the lady is reported to have had another lover—and the treaty languished. Mirabeau, determined to carry his point, is said to have resorted to a most infamous stratagem. He ingratiated himself with one of the lady's women, through whom he gained clandestine access to the house, and accustomed himself to pass the night in her society, on which occasions he would have his carriage waiting for him in an adjoining street. He was seen to leave the house at unseasonable hours; whispers, injurious to the lady's fame, were in consequence circulated; Mirabeau's rival, suspecting the fidelity and honour

of his mistress, retired from the field; and the parents of Mademoiselle de Marignane were induced to hush up the affair by consenting to her marriage with Mirabeau. The parties were accordingly united in June, 1772; and, in the following year, the Countess gave birth to a son.

In no respect, however, did this union satisfy the expectations of the Count. Though rich in prospect, the lady's actually available income was under 300*l.* a year. In the course of two years Mirabeau had not only disposed of all their tangible property, but had incurred debts to the amount of 100,000, or, according to some accounts, of 300,000 *livres*—between twelve and thirteen thousand pounds sterling. From his father, harsh and inflexible as ever, no relief could be obtained. On the contrary, he prevented him from making an arrangement with his creditors—procured a sentence against him from the Châtelet de Paris—and, by another *lettre de cachet*, banished him first to the château de Mirabeau, and afterwards to Manosque, whither he was followed by his wife.

In that melancholy retreat he acquired a knowledge of certain serious wrongs inflicted on him by Madame de Mirabeau. The most violent reproaches ensued between them.

Mirabeau had the imprudence to brave his sentence of exile, and to proceed to Grasse, where he met with his sister, Madame de Cabris. An unforeseen accident occurred, which led to a discovery of his journey. A Baron Villeneuve Mohans, having insulted Madame Cabris, and refused to meet Mirabeau, the Count chastised him for his cowardice. The Baron unblushingly published his own dishonour, and, lodging a complaint with a deputy judge, his vassal, procured the arrest of Mirabeau. The noise occasioned by this disgraceful proceeding exposed Mirabeau's violation of his sentence. His father availed himself, with the utmost avidity, of the circumstance; obtained against him a new *lettre de cachet;* and, in September, 1774, he was consigned to the château d'If.

In this confinement, the works of Tacitus and of Rousseau were his chief study; and, in the inspiration of the moment, he wrote his "*Essai sur le Despotisme,*" the most incoherent of all his productions, yet evincing splendid talent.

M. d'Allègre, the commandant of the château, interested himself greatly in his favour. He wrote to the Marquis, commending the resignation and excellent conduct of his son, and soliciting his enlargement; but the only result of his letter, so

honourable to the writer, was a change of Mirabeau's prison.

In 1775, he was transferred to the fortress of Joux, near Pontarlier. He had been there only a short time when, by his agreeable and fascinating manners, he obtained the governor's permission to reside in the town. There he wrote to his wife to rejoin him; but, under a variety of pretexts, she from time to time refused. Nor can this excite surprise, for his conduct towards her is said to have been brutal in the extreme.

The Count de St. Maurice, who commanded at Joux and at Pontarlier, introduced Mirabeau to the first society in the town. Here some extraordinary incidents occurred—incidents which influenced the fate of Mirabeau for years.

At Pontarlier he became acquainted with Sophie de Ruffey, the young and beautiful wife of the Marquis de Monnier, ex-president of the Chamber of Commerce at Dôle, a man upwards of sixty years of age. Mirabeau instantly became enamoured; and, most unfortunately for both parties, he succeeded in inspiring the lady with a passion equally ardent as his own. She is described as an elegant and accomplished, an interesting and most attractive woman.

M. de St. Maurice, the commandant of the fortress of Joux, whose age was also more than sixty, had not beheld unmoved the charms of Madame de Monnier; nor had he beheld them in silence: but his advances had been repulsed. He now perceived that, in Mirabeau, he had a favoured and successful rival. In his bosom, the passion of revenge succeeded that of love. He not only blackened the character of Mirabeau to his father, but apprised Monnier of the *liaison* between him and his wife. The first object of de Monnier was to institute a criminal process against the author of the outrage; but the Marquis de Mirabeau, on his part, and according to his usual custom, had recourse to power: he solicited a renewal of one of those favours of which he had so prodigally availed himself against his son; and, by another *lettre de cachet*, the offender was ordered to be imprisoned in the château de Dourlens. By a rapid movement, however, he escaped from his persecutors—succeeded in passing the frontier—and found an asylum in Switzerland. Soon afterwards, Madame de Monnier, who had been placed in a convent by her husband, also effected her escape, and rejoined him. From Switzerland, they passed into Holland (August, 1776), where they hoped to avoid further pursuit.

In the mean time, de Monnier prosecuted his suit for force and seduction; and, by the parliament of Besançon, Mirabeau, convicted, *par contumace*, was sentenced to death, to be executed in effigy, and to suffer confiscation of property.

Concealed in Holland, where he had changed his name to that of St. Mathieu, he, for a long time, supported himself by labouring for the booksellers, by whom he was overwhelmed with employment. Thus was he frequently engaged, without relaxation, from six in the morning till nine at night.

It was during his residence in Holland, that Mirabeau yielded to the reprehensible desire of revenge against his father, by writing certain memoirs against him, which were dispatched to France: an injury never to be forgiven, and which he afterwards bitterly repented.

About the same period, finding his means of subsistence insufficient, he conceived the project of embarking for America; but his design was frustrated. His exile in a foreign land had not disarmed the vengeance of his enemies. By the reiterated solicitations of his father, on the ground that he had violated the rights of nations, a new blow was struck. Provided with a *lettre de cachet*, signed by *Amelot* and *Vergennes*, an agent of the

police hunted out his prey, in the centre of a free country; and, in May, 1777, he and Madame de Monnier were seized at Amsterdam. The lady, then far advanced in pregnancy, was conveyed to the convent of St. Claire à Gien, and Mirabeau was consigned to the castle of Vincennes.

His cup of misery was not yet full: the death of his only son speedily followed.

During his imprisonment of three years and a half at Vincennes, he prevailed upon the Lieutenant of Police, M. Lenoir, to allow him to correspond with Sophie, on condition that the letters which passed between them should be submitted to his inspection, and afterwards returned to him in his official capacity as secretary.

These letters—at least Mirabeau's portion of them—discovered many years afterwards in the archives of the police, and published in four octavo volumes, consist of petitions for the liberation of Sophie—of advice to her, and for the education of their child, (a girl) "*que lui a donnée l'amour*"—of domestic negotiations—in fact, of all sorts of subjects, in endless variety, and without exhaustion. They evince wonderful fertility of imagination, equal facility of expression, and the most impassioned phraseology; yet, amidst all their merit, there are traces of bad taste, inequality of style, the

most heterogeneous tirades, breaks here and there, insertions and quotations to relieve the lassitude of the writer. In fact, as his friend, Dumont, observes, "Mirabeau, when writing to his mistress, would copy whole pages from the periodicals of the day. 'Listen, my beloved,' he would write, 'whilst I pour my whole soul into thy bosom!' and such intimate confidence was a literal transcription from the *Mercure de France*, or a new novel!"* In these letters, too, one of the great blots in Mirabeau's moral character is grossly and disgustingly exhibited. Whenever *love* happens to be his theme, it is merely that sensual passion so felicitously characterized by the French expression—"*l'amour physique.*"

Numerous were the works, original and translated, which he produced during his incarceration at Vincennes; chiefly, however, of a licentious nature—*Boccacio, Johannes Secundus, L'Erotica Biblion, Ma Conversion, Le Libertin de Qualité*, &c. The sacred volume was amongst the books which he had in his prison; and, aided by this (extracting poison from sweets), by scraps from the Commentaries of Calmet, by his classical recollec-

* Dumont's "*Recollections of Mirabeau*," page 220.

tions, &c., he wrote his *Biblion Erotica*, a mass—a conglomeration—of all the moral indecencies of the ancients, especially of the Jews. The originality of the idea atoned not for the obscenity of its exhibition. Nor did his vaunted love for Sophie prevent him from pourtraying, in his romance, entitled "*Ma Conversion*," a series of loathsome scenes, from which even that profligate debauchee, Aretin, might have shrunk with disgust. Yes, lamentable it is to say, in such scenes — revelling in filth, gloating upon impurity — Mirabeau seems "at home!" Oh, is it not revolting to humanity, that a mind so gifted should be so debased—that the divine splendour of genius should be obscured—almost extinguished—by the pollution of vice!

It affords, however, some consolation to know, that, in after life, Mirabeau repented of these errors —these crimes of his youth.*

At one period of his detention, Mirabeau was denied the use of paper. This privation he in some measure supplied by writing on the margins, and between the lines, of such printed books as happened to be in his possession. The loose, torn out

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* *Vide* LETTER LXXXII. of the present collection; vol. ii. page 254.

leaves he was accustomed to carry about with him, secreted in the folds of his clothes. It was in this manner, and under these circumstances, that he produced his "*Essai sur les Lettres de Cachet, et les Prisons d'Etat,*" in which, with all the energy and eloquence of one who had been a sufferer under uncontrolled authority, he pleaded for the right of every citizen to personal liberty, until proved to be unworthy of it, by a legal trial.

Persecution itself was at last wearied; the agents of a worthless father's vengeance shrank from further responsibility; and, in the month of December, 1780, Mirabeau once more obtained his liberty.

But his Sophie was still a prisoner! An attempt to enter the convent in which she was detained—to carry her off—and to restore her to liberty, failed.

For their common interest, Mirabeau then surrendered himself at Pontarlier, with the view of obtaining a revocation of the sentence which had been pronounced against him, *par contumace*, on the prosecution of the Marquis de Monnier for the forcible abduction of his wife. Previously to this prosecution, he had obtained from Madame de Monnier a lock of her hair, and had divided with her a portion of an active poison. This, upon the

appointed day of trial, he exhibited before the assembled court and audience, wearing it close to his heart, as a pledge of love, and as a certain means of destruction, should he fail. He pleaded his own cause, with all the eloquence and all the energy which, at a later period, he displayed at the tribune. His opponents were terrified — the auditors affected to tears, melted in commiseration; and the trial was terminated by an arrangement between Mirabeau and de Monnier. By virtue of that arrangement, all proceedings against Mirabeau were dropped; and Madame de Monnier obtained her liberty, and a settlement from her husband.

This may be regarded as the first splendid triumph of Mirabeau's eloquence.

Alas! what afterwards became of Sophie? Of her we hear no more!

Returning to Provence, Mirabeau next commenced a successful suit against his father for arrears and maintenance.

He also made new efforts to obtain possession of his wife's person and property. He sued her in open court, for a restoration of conjugal rights. He pleaded his own cause, before the parliament of Aix, in the presence of the Archduke Ferdinand

and other distinguished personages; but, although his eloquence, the most powerful, the most affecting, excited universal admiration, his claims were not allowed.

Again, and again, with a spirit and perseverance which nothing could daunt, he brought the case before different tribunals; but, finally, (July 5, 1783), the parliament of Paris pronounced a sentence of separation between the parties.

By the arrangement which had been made between the Comte de Mirabeau and the Marquis de Monnier, it had been settled that the latter should pay the costs of all the legal proceedings that had occurred between them. This part of the compact had not, it is presumed, been fulfilled by de Monnier; as it is understood that Mirabeau, dreadfully embarrassed in his pecuniary circumstances, left Paris in haste, after an intemperate conversation with the Keeper of the Seals, respecting the third memoir which he had published concerning de Monnier.

Mirabeau appears, also, to have been upon bad terms with his mother; for, shortly before his departure from Paris, in the summer of 1784, he writes to a friend—"My mother will not lend me a half-crown piece." Indeed, it has been repeatedly urged against him, though, apparently, without

sufficient proof, that, some time before, he had endeavoured to purchase the good graces of his father by writing certain memoirs, of an injurious tendency, against his mother, touching her want of affection towards him, amidst their family disputes.

When Mirabeau passed over to this country, at the period just referred to, he brought with him another victim of his seduction, a Mademoiselle Henrietta Van Haren, with whom he had become acquainted in Holland. She was "an amiable woman," says Dumont, "of respectable family, who had united her fate to his from the effects of a passion which absorbed every other consideration. She was unmarried," he continues, "young, beautiful, *full of grace and modesty.*" Now, really, notwithstanding all the high-sounding praises which have been pronounced upon Dumont's elevated notions of morality, benevolence, &c., in common parlance, that gentleman is, upon this occasion, neither more nor less than the apologist of vice. "She would have been *an ornament to virtue,*" he proceeds, "*had she never seen Mirabeau:*" in other words, she would have remained virtuous, had she never been tempted—had an opportunity of sinning never presented itself; "and no one perhaps was more deserving of indulgence and commiseration."

But what, was all this to Mirabeau—to the sensualist, the voluptuary, the profligate—Mirabeau? While yet remaining in London himself, he, upon some pretext, sent her over to Paris; and she, like Sophie, notwithstanding her love and devotion, was, in her turn, deserted! And for what, and for whom, did her seducer desert her? For a vulgar woman, a Madame le Jay, who will again be mentioned hereafter—a creature, profligate as himself. "Mirabeau's friends," observes Dumont, "never forgave him for sacrificing this interesting creature to a wretched woman, who had the insolence of vice, and boasted of her licentiousness. But Madame le Jay had artifice and malice: was familiar with intrigue, flattering and voluptuous! This woman took advantage of her influence over Mirabeau, to excite his natural violence, and promote her own interest; and his friends lamented to see him the prey of a covetous and debauched female, who had not one good quality to compensate her faults."

Truly, M. Dumont, this is miserable drivelling. Was he not justly treated? May not the fate of Mirabeau, in this case, be regarded as one example, amongst the thousands of instances that might be adduced, of the existence of a moral retribution?

This, however, is a fore-stalling of time and circumstance.

Hitherto, the character of Mirabeau has been contemplated chiefly with reference to morals and literature. In this light, a further development presents itself in the "LETTERS" now submitted to the reader. In these effusions of the moment, his appearance is advantageous: they evince no laxity of principle, or of conduct; from their perusal, no one would suppose him to be otherwise than a man of virtue, of honour, of rectitude. But he was a Proteus: Mirabeau was a mystery—a problem—a problem even to himself.

These letters will speak for themselves, and for their author. A remark, *en passant*, however, must be allowed. It is impossible not to be struck—as in Letters XLV., XLVI., and XLVII., on the constitutional melancholy of the English, its causes and effects—with his love of theory—with his ingenuity in constructing an hypothesis—and then with the industry, perseverance, and pertinacity, with which he adduces arguments in support of the original idea.

The moral and literary character of Mirabeau must be regarded as a key to his political one. In the latter, as in the former, his want of fixed prin-

ciples is, under all circumstances, and upon all occasions, glaringly apparent. Candour, however, must admit, that in politics, his conduct was less offensive, though not less vacillating or mischievous, than in morals.

The first work that Mirabeau published in London, was "*The Cincinnati*;"* the subject of which was a projected society in the United States of America, and which the friends of republicanism regarded with much jealousy, This, however, had been written in Paris, with the assistance of Champfort, and under the advice of Dr. Franklin.

The object of his "*Doutes sur la Liberté de l'Escaut*," the first idea of which is said to have been suggested by a letter of Chauvet's, was to deter the Emperor Joseph II. from his hostile projects against Holland. One of the notes appended to this tract, compared with a subsequent production of Mirabeau's, furnishes a curious instance of the different sentiments, and modes of expression, adopted by the writer, according to times and circumstances. It is directed against the Emperor Joseph's plans for the suppression of the convents, and the plunder of the church. Mirabeau thus

* *Vide* LETTER IX., vol i. page 35.

reproves the monarch for the violent expulsion of the ecclesiastics:—"I prefer a convent of nuns to a regiment of soldiers. If the former oppose the intentions of nature, they do not tear her to pieces; if they violate their institutions, it is in order to perpetuate their species; whereas the latter take an oath to destroy them upon the first signal of despotism. The internal revolutions which the Emperor has effected in his dominions have been greatly applauded; but what a number of objections might be brought against the eulogiums; at least, the panegyrists of Joseph II. ought to tell us what justice they find in driving a citizen from the profession which he has embraced, under the sanction of the laws. I will tell them plainly, there is as much injustice in expelling a friar or a nun from their retreat, as in turning a private individual out of his house. Despise the pious as much as you will, but do not persecute them; and, above all, do not rob them, for we ought neither to persecute, nor rob any man, from the avowed Atheist down to the most credulous capuchin. One of the greatest misfortunes attendant upon these masters of the world is, that they always want to make their subjects happy, (much happier, say they, than they were) in their own way; when it is

sufficient only to order to be obeyed, they are apt to lose themselves in a labyrinth of contradictions."

Let the reader compare the opinions here expressed, with those which he will find in the LXXXVth Letter in this collection, and in the *Speech upon Tithes and Church Property*, towards the close of the second volume.

To his translation of Dr. Price's pamphlet on the American war,* accompanied by reflections and notes, Mirabeau prefixed this motto:—"*La gloire d'un guerrier ne peut être complète, que lorsqu'il sait remplir les devoirs de citoyen.*"

For a time, his mind appears to have been much occupied with his scheme of "*Le Conservateur*," a periodical work, some volumes of which appeared. In fact, his brain teemed with literary projects.—His pen was his support: he was poor, he was extravagant, he was avaricious. "Had any one offered him the elements of Chinese grammar," observes Dumont, "he would, no doubt, have attempted a treatise on the Chinese language. He studied a subject whilst he was writing upon it, and he only required an assistant who furnished matter. He could contrive to get notes and addi-

* *Vide* LETTER VIII., vol. i. page 26.

tions from twenty different hands; and had he been offered a good price, I am confident he would have undertaken to write even an encyclopædia."

Whilst in London, Mirabeau became acquainted with several of the leading men of the day. Of many points of the English character, and of many of the public institutions of England, he was a professed and ardent admirer. In eloquence, the speeches of Lord Chatham were, with him, objects of enthusiastic devotion. "Should I ever be called upon to perform a part in liberating my country from slavery," said he, "Chatham shall be my model." * And, howsoever the copy might differ from the original, so, undoubtedly, he made him.

He was also deeply impressed with a sense of the excellence and importance of trial by jury. Soon after his arrival in London, he was robbed by his servant, Hardy, of a valuable MS., and of various articles of wearing-apparel, the property of himself and of the lady by whom he was accompanied.—Hardy was tried for the offence, at the Old Bailey, and acquitted; a termination of the process at which Mirabeau rejoiced, "as," said he, "it would have pained me to the soul, had he become a victim

* *Vide* LETTER XX., vol. i. page 94.

to the sanguinary laws of this country." These laws, thank Heaven! are now abolished. However, the manner in which the trial was conducted made a deep impression on the mind of Mirabeau. "Should I ever be able to return to France," he observes, "I will exert myself in making this trial turn to the benefit of my country. We must also have trial by jury, according to the English law." * And the French have got "trial by jury," but not *yet* "according to English law." "I will move heaven and earth," says he, in another of his letters, † "when I return, to alter our mode of trying criminals. This was the first time that a French culprit had appeared before an English tribunal since the peace; and each seemed to vie, one with another, to shew that justice, in this country, is always administered to the admiration of the world, in such a way as to extort approbation even from the prisoners themselves."

Mirabeau appears to have left London some time in the year 1785; as, in 1786, he is found at Berlin, engaged, as it is understood, on a secret mission, by Calonne, to observe the politics of the Prussian court. Here, his avarice and his ambition were

* *Vide* LETTER LIV., vol. i. page 327. † LV., page 366.

both excited. His communications respecting the cabinet of Berlin were addressed to M. de Calonne, and to the Duke de Lauzun. Devoured by ambition, and with an ever-craving appetite for gold, each successive despatch was urgent compensation and advancement.

Mirabeau was admitted to the presence of, and enjoyed a conversation with, Frederick the Great, then in his last illness. From his observations, he wrote two very free and important memorials, or letters of advice, to the succeeding monarch, on his succession. These tracts he published, after his return to France, under the title of "*Conseils à un Jeune Prince qui veut refaire son éducation.*" They are distinguished by precision of style, depth of thought, and dignity of precept.

It has been said that Mirabeau had views of employment under the new government; but that his hopes were frustrated by the licentiousness of his character, more particularly by his open profession of atheism. Altogether, this has the air of an erroneous and unjust insinuation. He was in the employment of his own government, from which he had higher expectations; and, with respect to his profession of atheism, Mirabeau was not an atheist, unless atheism and materialism be, of necessity, one and the same.

However, while at Berlin, Mirabeau became a member of the society of *Illuminati*, and published an essay on the institution, professing to disclose its secrets, but so absurd in its details as to subject the writer to the imputation of substituting fiction for fact—of drawing upon his powers of invention rather than from his sources of knowledge. He also addressed a letter to Cagliostro * and Lavater, in which he overwhelmed them with ridicule.

Amongst other documents which fell into Mirabeau's possession, whilst he was at Berlin, was a secret statistical table of Germany. This, with the assistance of a valet de chambre, who knew no language but the German, and of his French secretary, who was unacquainted with that language, he contrived to translate.

But, independently of his secret services, his chief and most important occupations at Berlin were the collecting of materials for his grand work on the Prussian monarchy—his statistical account of the Prussian and Saxon states—and his secret and sta-

* Cagliostro was the grand *charlatan* of his day. He practised animal magnetism, pretended to the possession of the *elixir vitæ*, and played off a thousand tricks of legerdemain to the astonishment of Europe.

tistical history of the court of Berlin. The first of these—"*Histoire de la Monarchie Prussienne*," published in four quarto volumes, in 1788—he prepared for the press in conjunction with his friend Major Mauvillon. It obtained for him a high reputation for political and satirical talent.

His "*Histoire Secrète et Anecdotes de la Cour de Berlin*," in two volumes octavo, was attended by an *éclât* of a different character. In it, the reigning king and several great personages were so disrespectfully treated—the intrigües of certain princes and courtezans were so freely and broadly exposed—that, when published (in 1789), it was ordered, by the parliament of Paris, to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman.

The period of Mirabeau's return to Paris—that of the assembling of the *Notables*—was one of great financial difficulty to the country. According to the testimony of Dumont, by whom he was accompanied, his character was, at that time, "in the lowest possible state of degradation." Sir Samuel Romilly, with whom he had become acquainted in London, "was almost ashamed of his former friendship;" and, "even in a city so lax as Paris," "his name was pronounced with detestation at the houses of some of" his "most intimate friends." But his

genius, his talent, his address, broke the spell. He entered into the discussions of the moment, in a spirit of reckless desperation, compatible only with the precarious nature of his public existence. He had long conceived and expressed a most contemptuous opinion of Necker, as a financier;* and this was the moment for giving effect to his notions. He launched a furious diatribe, under the title of "*Denonciation de l'Agiotage, au Roi et aux Notables.*" Ill-digested, declamatory, abounding in personalities, the secret instigators of the *brochure* were instantly apparent. It drew forth this epigram from Rivarol, a writer devoted to the court:—

Puisse ton homélie, ô pesant Mirabeau,
Assommer les frippons qui gâtent nos affaires:
Un voleur converti doit se faire bourreau,
Et prêcher sur l'échelle en pendant ses confrères!

In consequence of this publication, an order was issued for the apprehension of Mirabeau, and his confinement in the fortress of Saumur. This he evaded by a temporary concealment near Liege. From his retreat, he sent forth a sequel to his "*Denonciation,*" in which the colossal reputation of Necker was audaciously attacked. In his "*Lettres*

* *Vide* LETTER VIII., vol. i. page 31, *et seq.*

à M. Lacretelle," and his "*Correspondence avec Cérutti,*" his opinions respecting the Genevese minister are also unreservedly expressed.

Returning soon afterwards to Paris, he, through his writings against Necker, ingratiated himself with the minister Brienne.

It now becomes impossible farther to pursue the career of Mirabeau in detail. The assembling of the States-General excited in him the highest, the most extravagant expectations. He foresaw the approach of calamity; he determined—and with him to determine and to execute were the same—to "ride on the whirlwind, and direct the storm."

At the time of the elections, he went to Provence, in the hope of being chosen one of the deputies of the *noblesse* for that province; but, rejected, on the ground that he had no possessions there, he took a shop, or warehouse, and, in large letters, placed over the door these words:—

"MIRABEAU, MARCHAND DE DRAP."

He put on his apron—sold his wares—and thus, ridiculed as the *Plebeian Count,* he rendered himself so popular, that he was elected by acclamation one of the deputies from the *tiers état* to the States-General, from the communes of Aix and Marseilles.

On his arrival at the latter city, previously to his election, bread happened to be exceedingly dear, and the people had in consequence risen. Mirabeau, whose command over the passions of the populace was at all times absolute, rushed to the balcony of his apartment, and harangued the mob then assembled beneath his window. His appeal thus concluded:—"Bread would not be dear enough, were it at the price you wish; and it would be too dear, were it to remain at the present price. I will see to it. Depart—and depart in peace!"

The clamour instantly ceased, and the people retired quietly to their homes.

Of this *plebeian aristocrat*—a designation of which Mirabeau seems to have been vain—La Harpe was accustomed to say, that he was naturally and essentially a despot; and that, had he enjoyed the government of an empire, he would have surpassed Richelieu in pride, and Mazarin in policy.

Splendid as were Mirabeau's elocutionary requisites, by nature, by study, and by exercise, he, on the assembling of the States-General, soon distinguished himself as the most eloquent speaker, and took a leading part in those memorable discussions between the different orders, which terminated

in the assumption of the title National Assembly by the *tiers état.**

On the day of what was termed a royal sitting, the King left the assembly, ordering the deputies to depart; and the order was reported by M. de Brézé, the grand master of the ceremonies—"Gentlemen, you know the desires of the King!" For a moment all was consternation; when, according to various writers, Mirabeau rose, and, turning towards M. de Brézé, exclaimed, "Slave! go tell your master that we are here by the power of the people, and that nothing but the force of bayonets shall drive us hence!" Dumont, in relating this circumstance, omits the emphatic prefix, "*Esclave!*" However, that distinguished senator Baron Beytz, who was present on the occasion—who took down

* Soon afterwards, a decree was issued by the National Assembly, in which, amongst other subjects adverted to, it was observed, that "the denomination of National Assembly is the only one befitting the assembly in the actual situation of affairs, because the members composing it are the only representatives lawfully and publicly acknowledged and verified; because they are sent by almost the whole nation, and because the representation being one and indivisible, none of the deputies chosen, in whatever order or class, has a right to exercise his functions separately from the present assembly."

Mirabeau's words in writing the moment they were uttered, and to the extraordinary powers of whose memory all Belgium can bear testimony—assured the translator of these Letters, in the year 1808, that the following are the words actually pronounced:—

" Oui, Monsieur, nous avons entendu les intentions qu'on a suggérées au Roi; et vous qui ne sauriez être son organe auprès des états généraux; vous qui n'avez ici ni place, ni voix, ni droit de parler, vous n'êtes pas fait pour rappeler son discours. Cependant, pour éviter toute équivoque et tout délai, je vous déclare que si l'on vous a chargé de nous faire sortir d'ici, vous devez demander des ordres pour employer la force, car nous ne quitterons nos places que par la puissance de la baïonette."*

* " Yes, Sir, we have heard the intention which has been suggested to the King; and you, who are not recognised as his organ to the States General—you, who have neither seat, nor vote, nor right of speech here—you are not entitled to remind us his words. Notwithstanding, to avoid all equivocation and all delay, I declare that, if you have been employed to make us depart hence, you must obtain orders to employ force, for we shall not quit our places but by the power of the bayonet."

There is a well-engraved portrait of Mirabeau, beneath which are placed the words usually ascribed to him on this occasion.

This speech may be considered as constituting one of the epochs of the revolution. It confirmed the *tiers état* in their resistance to the regal authority; and scarcely had the King re-entered his palace, before the acts of the royal sitting had been cancelled.* Mirabeau followed up his success by proposing and carrying a decree, declaring the inviolability of the persons of the deputies.

"*Le Courrier de Provence*," or Mirabeau's Letters to his Constituents, was a literary speculation—a job—which, however, proved a powerful political engine, in its early stages. Dumont states, that all

* Necker and Duroverai, it seems, had been the instigators of this royal sitting; a circumstance of which Mirabeau was not aware till afterwards. "He complained of it to me," observes Dumont, "in terms of indignation. 'Duroverai,' said he, 'did not think me worthy of being consulted. He looks upon me, I know, as a madman with lucid intervals. But I could have told him beforehand what would be the fate of his plan. It is not with such an elastic temperament as that of the French, that these brutal forms must be resorted to. And what kind of man is that M. Necker, that he should be trusted with such means? You might as well make an issue in a wooden leg, as give him advice; for he certainly could not follow it." And getting warmer as he proceeded, he concluded with these remarkable words, '*It is thus that Kings are led to the scaffold!*' "—DUMONT'S *Recollections*, &c., page 80.

the Letters, from the eleventh, were written either by him, or by Duroverai, the ex-attorney-general of Geneva, and one of the members of the National Assembly. It was a partnership concern, the profits of which were to be divided amongst Mirabeau, Dumont, Duroverai, and le Jay, the bookseller and publisher. The circulation was great; but Madame le Jay, Mirabeau's *chere amie*, who had the management of the concern, tyrannized over her husband, and swindled the proprietors out of the produce. Mirabeau's connexion with this woman prevented right from taking its course. "She was in possession of all his secrets," says Dumont; "knew too many anecdotes of him; and was too dangerous and too fond of mischief for him to think of a rupture, although he was tired of her, and in the high sphere in which he was moving, often felt that such a connexion degraded him."

At length, the Journal dwindled into a mere report of the debates of the National Assembly, and ultimately passed into other hands.

In the infancy of the Jacobin Club, Mirabeau was a constant attendant at its meetings; but when the atrocious aims of that institution were completely developed, it was deserted by him, and treated with marked contempt.

The events of the 14th of July—that memorable day on which the Bastille was destroyed—may be said to have determined the fate, not only of the King, but of the empire. In the forenoon of the 15th, when Paris was in a state of the most dreadful disorder—without a police—without the means of subsistence—Mirabeau pronounced a furious philippic against the ministers, the court, the princes—even the king himself. This denunciation at once spread terror amongst the friends of the monarch, and proved the signal of proscription. The royal family was lost. Louis XVI. yielded at first, to the solicitations of the Maréchal de Broglie, to retire to Metz; but, afterwards, urged by the Duke de Liancourt, he determined to remain at Versailles, and, accompanied by his brothers, to surrender himself to the National Assembly, and place himself at the disposal of his subjects.

On the appearance of the Sovereign, Mirabeau engaged the Assembly to remain silent and immoveable. "A silent and mournful reception," said he, "is due to the monarch; in the moment of sorrow, the silence of the people is a lesson for kings."

On the succeeding day (July 16), Mirabeau proposed an address to the king, demanding the removal of the new ministers.

On the 8th of August, he repelled, with indignation, the idea of a national bankruptcy, and proposed to "nationalise" the public debt.—It is remarkable, that, notwithstanding his contempt for Necker, he sometimes found it expedient to support his plans. In a debate upon the finances, on the 27th of August, having expressed his approbation of Necker's proposals, he pronounced these remarkable words: "*La constitution est à l'enchère, c'est le déficit qui est le trésor de l'état, qui est le germe de la liberté.*"

It was on the 17th of August that Mirabeau presented his first *projet* of the "Declaration of the Rights of Man;" proposing, however, on the succeeding day, that the discussion upon that subject should not be brought forward until after the settlement of the constitution.* It was on the same day

* There is not a doubt, but that this famous paper originated in the "Declaration of Rights," mentioned in the LXXIVth Letter of the present collection. (*Vide* vol. ii., page 207.) "It," says Mirabeau, "will assist me, at some future period, in my *grand work*." But it was not the production of Mirabeau alone. It resulted from the labours of a committee of five. "Mirabeau, one of the five," says Dumont, "undertook the work with his usual generosity, but imposed its execution upon his friends. He set about the task; and there were he, Duroverai, Clavière, and I, writing, disputing, adding, striking

(August 17) that the Comte d'Artois (the ex-King, Charles X.) and his two sons, and also the princes of the house of Condé, left France; and that Louis XVI. proceeded to Paris, and took up his residence at the Hotel de Ville (*Cocarde Tricolore*). It was then that the National Guard, suggested by Sièyes, became more particularly the creation of Mirabeau.

In opposition to Necker (September 1), Mira-

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out, and exhausting both time and patience, upon this ridiculous subject." Yes, Dumont, one of the co-fabricators of this instrument, laughs it to scorn! "At length, we produced our piece of patch-work, our mosaic of pretended natural rights which never existed." * * * "*Men are born free and equal!* that is not true. They are not born free; on the contrary, they are born in a state of weakness and necessary dependence. *Equal!* how are they so? or how *can* they be so? if by *equality* is understood equality of fortune, of talents, of virtue, of industry, or of rank, then the falsehood is manifest. It would require volumes of argument to give any reasonable meaning to that equality proclaimed without exception. In a word, my opinion against the declaration of the rights of man was so strongly formed, that this time it influenced that of our little committee. Even Mirabeau himself, on presenting the project, ventured to make some objections to it, and proposed to defer the declaration of rights until the constitution should be completed. 'I can safely predict,' said he, in his bold and energetic style, 'that any declaration of rights anterior to the constitution, *will prove but the almanack of a single year!*'"—DUMONT'S *Recollections*, page 114.

beau contended strenuously for the absolute *veto*, as of vital importance to the monarchy. This conduct, however, gave great offence to the people; Mirabeau did not vote upon the question; and (according to Dumont) it is a curious fact, that the very speech which he delivered upon the occasion—a written speech, which he had not even read, before he pronounced it from the tribune—was the production, not of himself, or of any of his usual assistants in such cases, but of the Marquis de Casseaux, the "author of an unintelligible book on the Mechanism of Human Societies, and of another entitled 'Simplicity of the Idea of a Constitution,' which no one had been able to read or understand." Dumont declares, that he "never saw Mirabeau out of countenance but this once. He confessed to me," he adds, "that, as he proceeded with the manuscript, which he had not before read, he felt himself in a cold perspiration; and that he had omitted one half of it, without being able to substitute any thing in its stead, having, in his unwavering confidence in Casseaux, neglected to study the subject." Such a mode of proceeding, however, was not very unusual with Mirabeau. His famous speech upon the removal of the troops was written by Dumont; "and Duroverai drew

up the resolutions containing the proposed measure." *

Mirabeau observed to Mounier, the President of the National Assembly, who shuddered at the idea of a republic—" Ah, my good fellow, think you that we cannot do without a king? But what does it signify whether we have Louis XVI. or Louis XVII.? Would you wish it to be our fate always to be governed by a baby?"

When the *projet* of a law against emigration was presented, and the king's aunts had been arrested at the town of Arnai le Duc, Mirabeau protested strongly against the opinion of Barnave, that they should be allowed freely to proceed on their journey, notwithstanding it was in opposition to the law. " Il est prouvé," he exclaimed, " par l'éxpérience de tous les tems, qu 'avec l'exécution la plus despotique, la plus concentrée, dans les mains de Busiris, de pareilles lois n'ont jamais été exécutées, parcequ'elles sons inexécutables. Si vous faites une loi contre les émigrants, je jure de n'y obéir jamais!"

This declaration, pronounced with great energy, almost electrified the assembly.

It has been generally understood, that, about

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* *Vide* DUMONT's *Recollections*, page 86.

this period, Mirabeau, whose views of ambition never slept, attached himself to the Duke of Orleans — *Philippe Egalité* — the father of the present "King of the French," but finding him incapable of carrying into effect any great designs, he withdrew from his councils. Dumont does not seem disposed to believe this; but certainly his opinion is sustained by neither proof nor argument. Further, he makes this admission:—"I presume, that if the king had fled, Mirabeau would have proclaimed the Duke of Orleans, Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, and have become his prime minister. Such a scheme might easily find place in a brain like Mirabeau's; and his subsequent anger against the Duke of Orleans might warrant the idea, that he had been deceived in his expectations." One truth is quite evident; Mirabeau, intimate as he was with Dumont, did not admit him to a participation in *all* his secrets.

Let us glance at other sources. Gifford, in his *Life of Pitt*, (a work which, to a great extent, may also be regarded as a history of the French revolution) referring to an authenticated publication,* states, that, after the proceedings at

* *Procédure Criminelle instituée au Châtelet de Paris; sur*

Versailles, on the 6th of October, 1789, Mirabeau, in a conversation with the Count de Virieu, respecting the Duke of Orleans, said, that "his timidity marred his success: it was voted to make him Lieutenant-General of the kingdom; it only depended on himself; his theme was made for him — every thing he had to say was prepared for him.*"

Gifford also observes, that, at the time when "the King and his council were thrown into consternation by the insurrection at Paris, which had so far answered the end for which it was raised, it was proposed that the Duke of Orleans should present himself at the bar of the council, obtain admittance, and offer himself as a mediator between the King and the city of Paris, on condition that he should be appointed Lieutenant-General of the kingdom. Such was the plan devised by Mirabeau and his associates; but his heart failed him; he did not dare enter the council chamber; and, after the council was over, the only application he made to

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la dénonciation des faits arrivés à Versailles dans la journée du 6 Octobre, 1789. Imprimé par ordre de l'Assemblée Nationale. Vol. i., page 216.

* *Vide Life of Pitt*, vol. ii., page 373.

the King, (and that by a letter addressed to the minister,) was for permission to go to England, in case public affairs should take an unfavourable turn." *

It is unquestionable, that Mirabeau betrayed extraordinary anxiety, both before and after the attack upon the palace of Versailles. "Four hours before the mob reached Versailles, he went up to the president Mounier, in the midst of the debate, and in a whisper, said, 'Mr. President, forty thousand armed men are on their way from Paris; — hurry the debates; break up the sittings; — pretend to be ill, or say that you are going to the King!' —— 'I never hurry the debates,' answered Mounier coldly; 'I think they are but too often hurried through.' —— 'But Mr. President, these forty thousand men!' — 'So much the better; they have but to kill us all; — *all* —do you understand me? and the business of the state would go on the better for it.' — 'That's prettily said, Mr. President.' And thus the dialogue ended." †

There was also a smart remark of Mounier's, to Mirabeau, when the latter evinced his vexation and

* *Ibid.* † *Ibid*, page 411.

disappointment, on finding his name excluded from the list of deputies to attend the King from Versailles to Paris. Mirabeau said, he only wished to be one of the deputation, that he might appease the people, in case of any tumult on the King's arrival at Paris.—"Sir," said Mounier, "they who have power enough over the minds of the people to appease them, may also inflame them." *

Gifford, quoting Bertrand de Molleville as his authority, relates the following piquant anecdotes:—

"Mirabeau having proposed the adoption of some very strong measure, which to him appeared necessary, La Fayette started and exclaimed, 'Nay, M. Mirabeau, it is impossible that a man of honour can have recourse to such means.'—'A man of honour!' replied M. Mirabeau, 'ah! M. de la Fayette, I perceive that you would be a *Grandison Cromwell*;—you'll see where such a mixture will lead you.'"

"On a similar occasion, La Fayette having complained bitterly of the atrocious designs upon him, which were formed by his enemies, and even by

* BERTRAND DE MOLLEVILLE'S *Annals of the French Revolution*, vol. ii. page 142.

Mirabeau himself, Mirabeau called on him to explain what he meant. 'Well, then,' said La Fayette, 'I will tell you, since you force me to it, that I was thoroughly acquainted with your intention of having me assassinated.'—'I Sir?'—'Yes, Sir, in such a place, on such a day, at such an hour; I was sure of it.'—'You were sure of it?—You were sure of it, M. de la Fayette, and I am still alive!—What a good creature you are!—and you think of taking the leading part in a revolution!'"

"This short conversation," as Gifford justly observes, "displays the real and opposite characters of the two men, in a strong point of view."

Whatever might be the case with respect to the Duke of Orleans, no doubt rests upon the fact, that, towards the close of the year 1790, Mirabeau was bought over by the royal party. Principle—if Mirabeau had any principle—might have something to do with it; ambition, more; avarice, or a thirst of gain, so far as it might contribute to his luxurious and expensive enjoyments, most of all. His father died in 1790; but, although the hereditary estates were considerable, they were in the hands of creditors, and so deeply involved that they proved of no advantage to the successor. The title of Marquis, which descended to Mirabeau on the death of his

father, he never assumed: it was as le *Comte* de Mirabeau that his popularity had been gained, and *that* title he therefore chose to retain.

However, at this period, he "had quitted his furnished lodgings, and taken a house in the Chaussée d' Antin, which he fitted up like the boudoir of a *petite maîtresse.*" * Dumont states, that, through the negociations of the Duke de Levis, Monsieur (the King's brother, afterwards Louis XVIII.) undertook to advance him 20,000 *francs*, per month, until the encumbrances on his estates should be paid off; and that he received another pension from the court, through the Prince Louis d' Aremberg. In addition to these supplies, it is asserted, on other authorities, that he was presented by the court, with the gross sum of 25,000*l.* sterling. The King, in a letter to the Marquis de Bouillé, author of "Memoirs relating to the French Revolution," says, in allusion to Mirabeau and some others— "Although these men are not respectable characters, and I have paid an enormous price for the services of the first, yet I think they may be of some use to me; and it seems advisable to adopt certain parts of their plan."

* DUMONT'S *Recollections*, page 184.

Mirabeau had little delicacy in money transactions. Rivarol, a court writer before-mentioned, once remarked—"*Je suis vendu, mais non payé.*" Mirabeau's reply was—"*Je suis payé, mais non vendu.*' On another occasion, he said—"A man like me might *accept* a hundred thousand crowns, but a man like me is not to be *had* for a hundred thousand crowns."

At the close of 1790, Mirabeau's style of living was more expensive, more luxurious, more ostentatious than ever. "His table was sumptuous, and his company numerous. At an early hour, his house was full of visitors; it was an uninterrupted levee from seven in the morning till the hour at which he went to the assembly, often through a crowd waiting for him at the door, to enjoy the happiness of seeing him pass. Though titles had been abolished, his remained, and he was still the Count de Mirabeau, not only for his guests and his servants, but for the people, who always love to bedeck their idols." *

What his plans were for the safety of the king, and the preservation of the monarchy, will perhaps never be very accurately known. It is doubtful

* DUMONT'S *Recollections*, page 211.

whether they ever were completely formed or digested; yet his general views have been so far developed as to render it apparent, that, had they been carried into effect, it would have been well for France and for the rest of Europe—well for them then—well for them up to the present moment; well for them, at least in the estimation of those who do not consider the overthrow of every time-honoured institution, the slaughter of millions, the destruction of the altar and the throne, essential to the regeneration of mind, the melioration and happiness of the human race.

His intention was, unquestionably, to dissolve the National Assembly, and to restore the royal authority. By birth, by taste, and by feeling—notwithstanding he had resisted the influence of them all—Mirabeau was an aristocrat. He would, therefore, have abrogated the decree for abolishing the titles of nobility, he would have reinvested the aristocracy with their ancient privileges; and, says Dumont, "I am confident that he would have insisted upon a constitution similar to that of England, and never sanctioned any plan of which representation did not constitute the basis."*

* *Recollections*, page 254.

On the 14th of January, 1791, Mirabeau presented the *projet* of an Address to the French People, on the New Constitution of the Clergy; on the 16th, he was nominated a member of the Department of Paris; and, on the 31st, he was appointed President of the National Assembly.

In his capacity of President, he added greatly, not to his popularity alone, but to his deserved reputation. He simplified the forms of proceeding in the Assembly—conciliated its members—and, by his activity, impartiality, and presence of mind, he succeeded in obtaining the most unlimited control. His career was brief. His health became seriously affected. "If I believed in slow poisons," said he to Dumont, "I should think myself poisoned. For I feel that I am dying by slow degrees—that I am being consumed by a slow fire." His dreadful excesses and debaucheries were, however, the sole cause of his indisposition. He suffered violent attacks of ophthalmia. On the 28th of March (1791), he was seized with a violent inflammation of the stomach and bowels; and, at half-past eight, on the morning of the 2nd of April, he expired, at the early age of forty-two!

The effect produced upon the public mind, by his decease, was indescribable. The honours paid

to his memory were unprecedented. All public spectacles were suspended until after his funeral. His obsequies were conducted with the most extraordinary pomp and solemnity. They were "rather an apotheosis than a human entombment." The procession of deputies, ministers, and other public authorities,* extended upwards of a league. Nearly all Paris followed his remains to the church of St. Geneviève, where they were deposited, near those of the celebrated Descartes, with the intention of their remaining there till the Pantheon should be ready for their reception.—The solemn, melancholy music—the thousand torches—the intermittent cannon—produced an effect the most imposing that can be imagined. In the church of St. Eustache, Cérutti pronounced his funeral oration.

Busts of the deceased were placed in the halls of most of the municipalities of the kingdom; and funeral services were performed for him in several of the chief towns of the provinces. In the following year, however, when the unfortunate Louis XVI. was no more—when republicanism had achieved its bloody triumph—his busts were burnt, his ashes

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* For the order of the funeral procession, *vide* APPENDIX D., at the end of vol. ii.

were scattered to the winds of heaven, by the very mob who had worshipped him—who, with tears, and sobs, and lamentations of uncontrollable anguish, had followed him to the tomb!

The death-bed of Mirabeau was a perfect theatrical exhibition. "He dramatised his death," said Talleyrand. "It has been sweet to me," he observed, "to live for the people; and it will be my glory that I die amongst them!" Hearing the sound of cannon, firing for some public ceremony, he exclaimed, with enthusiasm—"*Seraient-ce déjà les funérailles d'Achilles!*" When in extremity, he sent for Talleyrand, from whom he had been long estranged. A conference of some hours restored their old affection; and, calling for his papers, he selected a speech upon wills: "There!" said he, "these are the last thoughts the world will have of mine! I deposit this manuscript with you; read it when I am no more; it is my legacy to the Assembly." Mark the sequel! "This speech on wills," observes Dumont, "was, to my knowledge, written by M. Reybaz. It is done with great care, and its style is not at all like that of Mirabeau."* A more extraordinary instance of this "thirst for artificial

* *Recollections*, page 252.

fame," as Dumont terms it, is not, perhaps, upon record. His last words were—"My friends! it is not for me that you have to weep, but for the monarchy, which descends with me to the grave!" His mind seems not, during his illness, to have been even in the slightest degree impressed with a sense of religion: he was decidedly a materialist.

The brief duration of his illness induced a suspicion of poison; but, on a *post mortem* examination, nothing was discovered that could sanction this belief.

In person, Mirabeau was somewhat above the middle height, robust, muscular, and strongly built; accidental circumstances of which he was not slightly vain. After leaving the National Assembly one day, accompanied by the Abbé Sièyes, on reaching the Terrace des Feuillans, the people surrounded them, exclaiming, "*Vive! vive à jamais! l'Hercule de la liberté!*" Mirabeau, pointing to his friend, replied, "*Voilà Thésée!*" Was this a compliment passed *en vérité*, or satirically?

Wearing a forest of hair, and his face being deeply furrowed and scarred by the small pox, he is said to have been ugly almost to hideousness; but of his very ugliness he was vain. Dressed

most attentively in the fashion of the day, "he was fond," observes Dumont, "of standing before a large pier glass, to see himself speak; squaring his shoulders, and throwing back his head." Few public speakers have studied theatrical effect more closely than Mirabeau. "When I shake my terrible locks—when I show my wild boar's head—no one dares interrupt me." Writing to a lady who had never seen him, he told her to imagine the face of a tiger that had been marked with the small-pox, and then she would have an idea of his physiognomy. However, with all this deformity of countenance, he was a decided favourite amongst the women. "How is it possible," said the Marquis de Monnier to his wife, "that a man, so remarkable for excessive ugliness, can exercise dominion over such a woman as you?" The lady was not without her answer. Even the actresses and dancers at the Opera were proud to achieve a conquest over this *Hercules of liberty!*

As an orator, Mirabeau possessed extraordinary power. When speaking, his eyes dilated—his countenance was animated with intelligence and enthusiasm. This follower of Chatham—this French Demosthenes—this Jupiter Tonans of the National Assembly—had, indeed, a voice of thunder! M. de Crassous, one of the members of the

Assembly, informed the translator of these letters, that he was present when Mirabeau delivered the following words, which fell like a bolt from heaven amongst them:—

"*Aux armes! Aux armes! De toutes les causes qui divisent les hommes, celle de la liberté est la seule qui légitime, la seule qui nécessite, la seule qui sanctifie l'effusion du sang: Aux armes! Aux armes!*"

Mirabeau's enunciation was remarkable for its distinctness: his voice was flexible, as well as full, manly, and sonorous.

But the matter of his speeches was not equal to their manner. He was "generally satisfied," says Dumont, "with a happy turn of expression, never gave himself the trouble of studying a subject sufficiently to be able to discuss it, and patiently maintain the opinion he had advanced. He seized every thing with marvellous facility, but developed nothing: he wanted the practice of refutation." Yet it must be allowed that he was more skilled in the art of extemporaneous speaking—more apt and happy at reply—than any of his companions. Panchaud said, that he was "the first man in the world to speak on a question he knew nothing about."* His presence of mind was imperturbable.

* *Recollections*, page 151.

Mirabeau was a vain rather than a proud man. He was vain of his person,—his learning,—his oratory,—his acting,—his fencing,—his authorship,—his mode of correcting proofs for the press; —vain of every thing. Yet, as a *littérateur*, he was one of the most notorious and unblushing plagiarists that ever existed. As a writer, or as a speaker, he never scrupled to avail himself, to whatever extent occasion might require, of the labours of others. A *proud* man would not have thus acted. "His work on the 'Bank of St. Charles,' his 'Denunciation of Stockjobbing,' his 'Considerations on the order of Cincinnatus,' and his 'Lettres de Cachet,' were his titles to fame. But if all who had contributed to these works had each claimed his share, nothing would have remained as Mirabeau's own, but a certain art of arrangement, some bold expressions, and biting epigrams, and numerous bursts of manly eloquence, certainly not the growth of the French Academy. He obtained from Clavière and Panchaud the materials for his writings on finance. Clavière supplied him with the subject matter of his 'Letter to the King of Prussia.' De Bourges was the author of his address to the 'Batavians."* It has been

* *Recollections*, page 15.

already seen, that Dumont and Duroverai wrote many of his speeches. Mirabeau was not profound; but he possessed the art of seizing upon grand points, and making the most of them. His facility in appropriating the ideas, thoughts, and expressions of others was truly wonderful; with a Promethean touch he made them his own. In fact, Dumont,—all the parties enumerated above,—and many others,—were neither more nor less than his journeymen—his tools.

Mirabeau was not,—

"In wit a man, simplicity a child:"

he was a man of splendid genius; but his genius was not subservient to his reason; he was deplorably wanting in self-respect; he was impetuous, violent, and indiscreet;—he possessed not the discretion of a child ten years of age. His shrewdness—his perspicacity,—were prodigious. He was profoundly skilled in the art of flattery; persuasive—capable of cajoling; yet open to flattery himself,—ever liable to be cajoled, and converted to the purposes of others, even by men immeasurably his inferiors in knowledge and in intellect.

Temperate in drinking, he was the reverse in every other gratification of sense. His perceptions were nice; his conduct was gross. Ardent, as

a lover, he was inconstant as he was ardent; sensual—heartless—profligate.

Had Mirabeau been virtuous, he would have been great; as he was vicious, he was only wonderful.

There! We have not written a *Life of Mirabeau*: that may, or may not come hereafter; but we have redeemed our pledge—we have fulfilled our intention:—we have presented a graphically characteristic portrait of one of the most extraordinary men of modern times.

MIRABEAU'S LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Pecuniary Difficulties.

Paris, Rue du Coq Heron, June 3, 1784.

I HAVE been in an absolute agony, my dear friend, these last three days. I am most anxious to hear from you. Let me hope that I may not visit the interior of a prison. Literally, I am not in possession of money sufficient to defray the expenses of a *fiacre*, without the use of which I cannot possibly proceed with my affairs. I have not yet received a *sou* from the sale of my horses.

My mother will not lend me a half-crown piece. In a word, and in every sense of that word, I am in a most cruel situation. My trust is in you, and in you alone: until all these knots are disengaged, I must, I suppose, have patience.

Vale et me ama.

M.

LETTER II.

Second Appeal to Friendship.

July 17, 1784.

I possess not, all my worldly substance together, more than fifteen livres. Neither I, nor Madame Nehrat, have a single thing we can send to be pledged. I cannot leave this place without money, and therefore manœuvring is of no avail. Will you, or will you not, relieve me from the awkward situation in which I am placed? You must decide promptly: I ask no more than friendship entitles me to ask. The money you are daily throwing away in dinners to Peter and Paul, for whom you care not one straw, would suffice to settle my affairs. You tell me to sell your Tokai wine; but how am I to do so, unless you send me samples? No one will buy it simply because I say it is good.

Adieu, my friend.

M.

LETTER III.

London.—First Impressions.—Previous Journey from Paris to Dieppe.—Disasters by Sea.—Post-coach travelling Companions.—Brighton.—Lewes.—Beauty and Fertility of the Country.—Comparison between France and England.—London Pavements.—Moral and Physical Evils.

London, August 30, 1784.

It is from this imperial city, which, built of bricks, without elegance or grandeur in her edifices, points to the Thames and his proud bosom, and seems to say,—"What darest thou compare to me? Let the ocean, let the world, bring hither their tributes!"—it is from this city that I write, in haste, my eyes fatigued with sights of novelty, my mind occupied by a thousand painful thoughts, both with regard to the present and the future—but my heart and imagination filled with you.

Our journey would form an entertaining novel. You are acquainted with the disagreeable events which occurred before we left Paris, and must have felt for our situation while we were proceeding to Dieppe; but—unless, indeed, you have been in a storm—you cannot form to yourself an idea of our sea-voyage. Twice we were on the point of being lost: first, by the force of the wind and waves, which nearly overwhelmed our feeble bark; and again, just as we were entering the Adder—that is, the entrance into the port. Our vessel was tacking, when she struck against a cable under water; and, a heavy wave dashing over her at the same moment, we were as near as possible going to the bottom. Fortunately, my poor friend was in that horrible state of suffering called sea-sickness, the moral effect of which is to render one indifferent, or, rather, perfectly reckless. I, who never in my life experienced sea-sickness, absolutely vomited blood; and

my nerves have not even yet recovered their wonted energy.

As soon as we landed, we ordered a post-coach. For companions, we had—an Irish gentleman, who, I should say, was an honest man, had I not always been of opinion that such a person can hardly be found; a French lady, whom he had taken the liberty of forcibly removing from her own family, by the inherent right which every Irishman possesses of appropriating to himself the first rich heiress that falls in his way; and an English clergyman, of gentle manners, and extremely learned. We took a carriage, not from motives of vanity; but all the *élégans* of England, and the stars of the Court, were at Brighthelmstone, attracted by the presence of the Prince of Wales, who is taking the benefit of sea bathing, and therefore not a seat was to be obtained in any of the stage-coaches.—These post-coaches are excellent. Gentlemen's carriages in France

are not equal to them: they move with three times the rapidity of our own crazy vehicles, and, in expense, do not exceed our moderate charges. This mode of travelling, however, —notwithstanding the economical talents, and energetic industry, of our Hibernian companion, whom I have created superintendent of our caravanserai—cost us about three times as much as it ought to have done. But I must add that, on our arrival at Dieppe, finding the packet sailed only twice a week, and difficulties arising respecting my passport, I hired a vessel. Were I not afraid that, in divulging a secret, it might prove injurious to some poor devils who, like ourselves, made use of it, I could prove to demonstration how those sublime forms of our inquisition, called the Admiralty, are altogether superfluous; unless, indeed, for the purpose of putting money into the pockets of those gentlemen who are entrusted

with search warrants—the natural result of such legislative regulations.

We dined at Brighthelmstone, our meal consisting of the finest butchers' meat I have ever tasted. As the very act of treading upon an English floor sets fire to one's purse, particularly in the vicinity of the Court, (for gold is the mandragora of every Court,) we went to Lewes to pass the night. Are you not scandalized, that an English borough should bear the name of one of our Kings? From this place to the capital, we passed through the finest country in Europe—views the most varied—verdure in the true sense of the word—beautiful and rich plains, each estate remarkable for its rural elegance—a most attractive spectacle, a delight to the mind, which it is impossible to exaggerate. The approaches to London are of an Arcadian beauty, of which even Holland had given me no idea. If they admit of comparison, it is

only with some of the valleys of Switzerland, Now, this observation will strike every beholder,—this lordly people are particularly engaged in agricultural pursuits, in the bosom of their island; and this it is that has so long preserved them against their own mad excesses.

I felt my mind strongly and deeply agitated while passing over these fertile and happy lands; and I exclaimed—"Whence arises this sudden emotion? These mansions, compared to ours, are mere cottages. Many parts of France, even the least agreeable provinces, and the whole of Normandy, which I have just traversed, are certainly more favoured by nature! Here and there, indeed, are to be found—but certainly in every province of our country—splendid edifices, gigantic monuments, great public works, magnificent instances of the mighty efforts of man! Yet, all I now see affords more real satisfaction to my mind, than the sensation of

astonishment excited by what I have left. Nature is here in a meliorated, but not a forced state; and these narrow, but excellent roads, make my heart sink with sorrow when I reflect upon the degradation of the *corvoyeurs*. This admirably cultivated land shows that property is respected; this care, this universal cleanliness, is a positive symptom of comfort. This rural wealth proves, that the inequality of fortunes is not excessive—a source of so many evils! As, with us, magnificent edifices are surrounded with huts, every thing tells me that, here, the people are something; that here, each man possesses the full and free exercise of his faculties; and that, therefore, I find myself in a perfectly new state of things."

Now observe, my dear friend, this is so truly the cause of the effect, that, on my arrival in London, nothing struck me more forcibly than the sight of those flag-stone pavements, which caused that excellent man,

La Condamine, to fall upon his knees, and exclaim, "Thank God! I am in a country where they who are obliged to go on foot have not been forgotten!" Every thing else, as we passed through the town, appeared to me uncommonly plain; so much so, that I could not but agree with the apathetic Italian, who said—"The town is composed of streets on the right, streets on the left, and a road in the middle." Every town resembles every other. If, however, you allow this one to enjoy admirable cleanliness, which extends to every thing, which embellishes every thing —an attraction both for body and soul—to an extent which no ancient city ever possessed; yet, here, you will find frightful political maladies—a moral sink of iniquity —and, perhaps, as elsewhere, a physical one also; men crowded together, and infecting each other with their breath—an eternal struggle between the corruptors and the corrupted—between the prodigal and the

wretched—between the titled mob and the *canaille* of the multitude. It is either better or worse than Babylon; just as you please—it is a matter of indifference to me. Take this, however, into consideration: I have hitherto seen but little, and London will afford me, better than any other great commercial city, the means of active observation, which cannot fail to be interesting. But I have made you acquainted with my first impressions, in which there is generally much truth.

LETTER IV.

Climate of England—Fogs—Newton, Young, and Hervey.

London, September, 1784.

First, that which distinguishes, in the most decided manner, this climate, is its extreme inconstancy—its extreme humidity. Every wind brings rain with it; and, even in the finest weather, the air is filled with perceptible vapours. Fogs are to be met with every where; but, of all the countries through which I have wandered, there is not one where they so frequently occur—so heavy—sombre, and slow to disappear. It is their own country, *par excellence*; and, were it not that impetuous winds are traversing and sweeping it incessantly, the land would never be dry: indeed, it will easily be understood, that the rays of the sun, passing through so dense an atmosphere, must lose

their strength and active powers. I will not say, with the Marquis de Caraccioli, "That a fine sunshine in England, is not quite so bright as moonshine in Naples;" but this is certain—seldom does he appear in all his splendour; and, at the very moment you expect to enjoy his presence, he comes forward surrounded by a veil. Generally speaking,—and I cannot assign any cause for the circumstance, unless it be a particular regard for Newton and his disciples—Nature has shown herself, in these lands, less sparing of fine nights than of fine days. Those noctambulists, Young and Hervey, always in a hurry that the sun should go down, are not, after all—taking into consideration the days and nights of their country—quite so splenetic as might be imagined. By-the-by, the following lines, written by the latter night-wanderer, could have been composed only by a native of this island:—"Liberty, that dearest of names; and property, that best of charters; give an additional, an inexpres-

sible charm, to every delightful object. See how the declining sun has beautified the western clouds; has arranged them in crimson, and skirted them with gold. Such a refinement of our domestic bliss is property; such an improvement of our public privileges is liberty. When the lamp of day shall entirely withdraw his beams, there will still remain the same collection of floating vapours; but O, how changed, how gloomy! The carnation streaks are faded; the golden edges are worn away, and all the lovely tinges are lost in a *leaden-coloured louring sadness*. Such would be the aspect of all these scenes of beauty, and all these abodes of pleasure, if exposed continually to the caprice of arbitrary sway, or held in a state of abject and cringing dependence."

I will continue this subject in my next; for the present, adieu!

LETTER V.

London Fogs—Consumption of Coal—Why England produces many Poets, but few Painters—Influence of Diet upon National Character.

London, September, 1784.

WHAT I have said respecting the fogs of England, is even more correctly applicable to those of London. The prodigious quantity of coal that is consumed, adds to their consistence, prolongs their duration, and eminently contributes to render these vapours more black, and more suffocating;—you feel this when rising in the morning. To breathe the fresh morning air, is a sort of happiness you cannot enjoy in this immense capital: it is a poetical chimera, which, like many others, exists only in the heated brain of a writer of eclogues. It is to this privation, I am convinced, that we must attribute the custom,

almost general amongst the English, of rising later in the morning than we do. They pretend, indeed, that these exhalations, impregnated with sulphur and saltpetre, far from being injurious to health, neutralize the fog, purify the air, and keep up a fixed temperature. This may be, for aught I know to the contrary; but it is also certain, that they prevent the weather from clearing up, render the surrounding atmosphere more opaque, more dense, and mix up with the air you breathe a black and extremely disagreeable smoke.

A clear sky is a novelty in this city, which makes one forget every other; and a stranger cannot fail to remark the extraordinary interest excited in all classes on the appearance of a fine day: "What beautiful weather! What a lovely morning!" is heard on all sides.

Is it not this scarceness of fine weather in England, that will explain why this country

has produced so many great poets, and so few excellent painters? Seldom do you see Nature clothed in all her beauty. Nature, in all her charms, is like a mistress whom you can catch a glimpse of only now and then. But, in other countries, such as Italy, Switzerland, and in some of the southern provinces of France, she is a woman with whom you are accustomed to pass your life. Her charms no longer possess the same attraction, nor produce such lively sensations. The vivacity of these impressions is sufficient to form great poets, but not great painters; because, to copy nature with the pencil, it is not sufficient to have received a strong impression: the resources of this art require more time: the artist must contemplate his model at leisure; he must have fine weather, in order to seize the proper light which he intends to distribute on the objects he is imitating. It is only under a pure sky that true colours are to be found,—colours lively and brilliant.

Were you to be told, that, in a certain latitude, an island exists in which the winds are extremely changeable, the climate temperate, but the air almost always loaded with fogs and humid vapours; were you also to be told, that the people who inhabit this island, having procured, by labour and industry, considerable wealth, have acquired the habit of partaking plentifully of food; that, although they eat but little bread, which is more readily converted into chyle, but a great quantity of meat, much butter, and potatoes; and that the customary beverage is a strong beer, extremely nourishing, and even in which opium is frequently infused,—would you not, at the moment, be inclined to think that a man circumstanced thus, with respect to climate and diet, must possess more substance, more life, more force and power for action, be better able to endure fatigue; but that, generally speaking, his fibres must be more flaccid, more soft, consequently less elastic, less sus-

ceptible, and, putting exceptions out of the case, his animal spirits must be less vivacious, and circulate through his frame with less rapidity? Well! this supposition here becomes reality.

English caricatures invariably represent the Frenchman as a poor, skeleton-looking person; and we must acknowledge, that, in general, the English appear much better fed. This arises not only from the fact, that the English eat a greater quantity of food, but also from the diversity of aliments which these two people are accustomed to partake of. The English eat rich fat substances; ours, though sufficiently nourishing, are less heavy. If excess be in any way committed, by overfeeding, the moral character must become heavier—man will be low-spirited.

But I am afraid you will say, that English food has already had its effect upon your friend; so, in haste, adieu.

M.

LETTER VI.

The English Malady.—Effects of Tea, and Ardent Spirits on the Nervous System.—Causes of Difference between the French and English National Character.—Literary Undertaking.

September 4, 1784.

THE malady to which the English are particularly subject, and whose name has passed into every European language, *the Spleen*, arises, I have no doubt, from the double influence of diet and climate. Ask our old friend, Montaigne, how much the continual appearance of a cloudy atmosphere disposes the mind and the imagination to sorrow and low spirits. The desire, the anxiety, to get rid of this heaviness, make the English have recourse to several means, all of which are attended with bad effects. In the first place, they drink a great quantity of tea. This beverage facilitates digestion; it agitates and

dissolves the humours; but it excites perspiration, and, on this account, it contributes to relax the whole nervous system. A still more pernicious plan is the immoderate use of strong wines and ardent spirits. Gin and brandy are the punch of the lower people; and even women of this class are not less addicted to drinking than the men.

Combining all these meteorological and dietetic observations, I think we can understand why the English character is more slow, more deliberate, more restless, more sombre than ours; why the Englishman's actions are more rapid, if movement be required—more steady, unless under excitement; why his gaiety is less natural, more rare, and more convulsive, with less levity and more firmness; why he is more alive to feeling, less communicative, but more to be relied upon. When the Englishman is active, his action is calculated reflection: his moments of folly and gaiety seem to approach

intoxication, and, more or less, resemble an attack of fever.

Tell me, my friend, should I embark in the undertaking which I mentioned to you, may I hope that you will assist me, by pointing out the ancient authors whose works deserve to be analyzed, or in naming the fugitive literary productions which ought to be preserved in my "*Conservator?*" A guide, with a more exquisite taste and incorruptible conscience, I could not select to direct me in the proper path. Do you think I can obtain any subscribers in France? and tell me particularly, and with your wonted frankness, what your opinion is respecting the matter.

Vale et me ama.

LETTER VII.

Literary Projects.

London, September, 1784.

THE information you give me concerning your health, and the kind of life you lead, affords me the greatest pleasure; yet, for myself, I cannot help experiencing considerable regret. How much I should have *felt* life, had I spent the winter with you. How many pleasant hours I should have passed—my mind and my thoughts improved by your conversation! Understand me well! In this town, my spirit acquires, but my soul, philosophically speaking, is in a state of widowhood, and my thoughts are still-born, for want of a friend to excite, or understand them. I am forming new combinations, whence must spring useful fruit, but which,

to be matured and ripened, will require the genial warmth, the fostering power of your friendship and talents. At present I am only collecting: arrangement will follow; but never did I stand so much in need of your encouragement and guidance.

I shall write several works during my residence here; amongst others, one, the materials for which have come by chance into my possession, and which I think will afford you some entertainment.

Adieu, I will not say to you: if you wish for characteristic anecdotes from this country, to increase the bulk of your large collection, write to me often, and I will constantly make you a return for your letters. Yes; write to me often, for your letters afford me consolation, and sustain my courage.

M.

LETTER VIII.

Object of "The Conservator"—*Arabian Apologue—Dr. Price's Pamphlet on the American Revolution—Ingratitude of Governments illustrated by another Eastern Apologue—Necker's Treatise on Finance—Turgot and Necker compared—An Eagle in Finance.*

London, September, 1784.

THE literary affair, my dear friend, to which I alluded, is one of great magnitude; no less than that of collecting all that has been written upon political economy, hitherto considered as vain metaphysical disquisitions. It is proposed that the work shall appear in French and in English; and, whether it be successful or not, is a circumstance which can affect only my conscience, or my self-love, as I am to receive a settled monthly stipend. However, the performance not affording any scope for scandal—as, with much prudence,

I intend only to speak of things—I thought it my duty to advise the gentlemen concerned to adopt some plan to excite curiosity. "The greatest service," I observed, "that can be rendered to polite literature, is to *abridge*—to make a good selection of every published truth, rejecting falsehood and error. A "*Conservator*," that should analyse every publication that may appear, without giving extracts from any;—that should cull, from the dung-hill of periodical works, the few spangles that may have fallen, and render itself a *dépôt* for detached pieces, which, by their brevity—that is to say, by one of the greatest merits they can possess—would be truly useful; and, if undertaken with conscientious motives—betraying no prejudice, and arranged with great care—would meet with success, perhaps not rapid at first, but permanent, and constantly increasing."

The intended proprietors are turning this idea in their minds; and you may invoke

Heaven for the commencement of the work: it will produce me fifty louis a month, and that is as much as I want even in this town. This income, it is true, would be purchased by excessive and unpleasant labour; unpleasant, because it would deprive me of that time which, otherwise, I should employ in cultivating my own thoughts; but I shall consider it as a course of studies that I must finish when fortune may think proper to render me independent. Men of greater merit than I possess have been condemned to labour quite as hard. Whenever I feel inclined to betray vexation of spirit, I call to mind the Arabian apologue:—"I was continually complaining of the strokes of fate, and the severity of men. I was without shoes, and possessed of no money to purchase any. I one day went to the mosque of Damas, and I there beheld a man who had lost both his legs. I praised God, and I no longer complained of wanting shoes."

You will perhaps be surprised that "*The Cincinnati*" is not yet in circulation; but, in fact, I have been occupied in translating a pamphlet by Doctor Price, entitled, "*Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution, and the Means of making it a Benefit to the World;*" and in writing preliminary observations and notes, with which I hope you will not be dissatisfied, considering they were written far from you.

You mention in your last letter, the conduct of government towards poor De R. What could he expect but ingratitude? How seldom do you meet with instances of generous treatment towards those who have rendered the greatest services to their country! A pretty list history presents to us, from the time of Belisarius to the present day! I must give you another short story, to be found also I suppose in the Arabian tales, but not less true on that account. "There was a certain husbandman, in a cer-

tain kingdom, who lived in a certain place, under a certain hill, near a certain bridge. This poor man was somewhat of a scholar, and given to country learning, such as astrological predictions of the weather, and the like. One night, in one of his musings about his house, he saw a party of soldiers belonging to a prince at enmity with his own, coming towards the bridge. He immediately ran and raised the drawbridge; and, calling all his family, and getting his cattle together, he put his ploughs, his household furniture, every thing he could collect, behind it. By these means, he arrested the progress of the enemy till daylight, when all the neighbouring lords and gentlemen saw their enemy as well as he. They crowded on, with great gallantry, to oppose the foe; and, in their zeal and hurry, throwing our husbandman over the bridge, and his goods after him, effectually repelled the invaders." This accident proved the safety of the kingdom;

yet no one ought to be deterred from serving the public, on account of what happened to this rustic; for, though he was neglected at the time, and every one said he was an honest fellow, and no one's enemy but his own in exposing his all, and that nobody said he was every one's friend but his own, the man had the privilege that he, and none other than he and his family, might beg on that bridge in all times following.—*Vale et me ama.*

M.

P. S.—I have just heard that a work in three volumes, by Necker, giving his advice respecting the administration of finance, is about to make its appearance. It is reported, that the King has perused it, that the Queen has studied it, Monsieur also, and, no doubt, the Dauphin, not omitting M. de Castries. Eighteen thousand copies are about to be conveyed to the extremities of the globe, in

order to prove that France has lost a valuable servant, and that this same servant is extremely angry. I know what to think of Necker's financial talents, and of his ministerial operations; and certain facts have come to my knowledge, not much in his favour. He abandons his country at the very moment he had the power to save it, and place it for ever out of the danger by which it is now surrounded. This conduct shews him in his true light. Turgot was not a Genevese—a very different man indeed—yet he would have felt honoured and delighted in being called upon, in any way—and no trouble would he have spared—to save even a molehill where liberty might be endangered.

This haughty person was ashamed of his parent—(I will enter into particulars one of these days)—no stuff in him to make a great man! All this, however, may not prevent his book on finance from being a good one.

When a man is acquainted with the four rules of arithmetic, and can conjugate the verb "To Have," and moreover be laborious, he is a perfect eagle in finance. Again, adieu.

M.

LETTER IX.

Health, Studies, &c.—French and English Editions of "The Cincinnati."

London, September, 1784.

I AM so vexed with you, that I am determined not to say a word, in this letter, either about England or Englishmen; but, as I still believe that you love me, I will talk about ourselves. Our health is good. My companion * continues what you knew her to be, lovely, kind, affectionate, and courageous. Here, I find sufficient food for an active mind: I am studying hard; studying man, and taking notes. Notwithstanding the attention I meet with on all sides, and the kindness I experience from those with whom I am acquainted here, I am not without

* Amelia Henrietta Van Haren.

considerable uneasiness as to what may possibly happen. French literature is little cultivated in London; the "getting up" of a book is an expensive affair; besides which, the booksellers are a timid race; so that a sure way of starving, is to set up for a French writer. However, they are printing "*The Cincinnati;*" but it will not produce much. It is to be translated by a man of talent; the English edition will therefore appear simultaneously with the French one. Two French booksellers, in Paris, unnecessary to name in a letter—one of them an opulent man—have written to say they would take 1500 copies, at fifty *sous* each, if they could be delivered at one of the frontier towns. Now, I have experienced the greatest difficulty in prevailing upon an English publisher to print 1500 for the French edition; and had not some of my English friends, whose talents are appreciated, spoken of the work in high terms, no one would have published it on his own

account. The French, residing here, are not a little surprised at my success with the publisher; indeed, I have some reason to be so myself, knowing that Emsley absolutely refused to print the "*Confessions of J. J. Rousseau,*" fearful lest the work should remain on his hands.—*Vale,*

M.

LETTER X.

Ennui — Gratitude — Solicitations in favour of Mr. Manning, an English friend.

London, October, 1784.

I SHOULD not have written to you yet; not because you are in arrears with me, but because I am low-spirited and unhappy; amongst other reasons for which, the absence of my lovely companion is the principal. You will have embraced her before this letter can reach you. I should not have written, I say, although I ought to return you thanks for your kindness to Target, had not gratitude impelled me to shake off my spleen, and conquer my melancholy illness.

I never recommended to your notice any one in France, as I felt no desire to take advantage of the situation in which you are placed; but, on this occasion, I must make

an exception to the general rule I have laid down, in favour of Mr. William Manning, the brother-in-law of Mr. Vaughan, a man of great worth, and one of the truest philanthropists existing in Europe—an Englishman, totally divested of national prejudices, to whom I was introduced by M. Franklin, and who has rendered me every kind of service. Mr. M., the son of one of the most opulent and most respectable landholders in Great Britain, is about to sail for the West Indies, whither he is called by business of great moment. He wishes for letters of introduction to Count Damas, in Martinique, and to Count Arrot, at Tobago. (I do not know whether the name of Arrot is properly spelled.) You are particularly acquainted with the family of Damas; and were you not, the great and well acquired reputation you enjoy, the universal esteem entertained towards you, would place you on a footing of equality. But, now I reflect again, the Marquis de

Vaudreuil can do what I want, and he is your friend. The people among whom I am residing understand men, and he is esteemed and beloved by them. Render me the service of getting him to write a line; I say service—because I may never have another opportunity of being useful to a man who has behaved like a brother to me, and could not have manifested more real kindness towards your friend, had he been acquainted with me for years. * Adieu, my friend.

M.

* Thus far, from the commencement, Mirabeau's epistolary communications appear to have been all addressed to the same individual. Those which follow, more miscellaneous, more diversified in character, seem to have been written to various persons. The greater part of them—rough draughts, probably, of more finished compositions—are without regular dates; but they are inserted, as nearly as it has been found practicable, in chronological order.

LETTER XI.

Indisposition of the Writer's Friend—Physic, Law, and Literature—Atheistical Sentiments in the "Sejanus, of Bergerac"—Suicide—Strictures on the English Constitution, Government, and Character—National Character of the English, not understood by the French.

London, Hatton-street, [Garden,] Holborn,
November, 1784.

I HAD no intention to scold you, my dear friend, nor to interpret your silence so as to afflict me; but I was uneasy respecting you. Your debilitated constitution and your fiery disposition will preserve each other; but they will often clash; and life is something, although, in my opinion, to suffer nothing is infinitely better. I am low-spirited and unhappy: my lovely and amiable companion* is ill, and subject to fainting: she has already

* Amelia Henrietta Van Haren.

had eleven fits. Fortunately, the attacks are intermittent, and for two days she is pretty well; but extreme weakness, and nervous affections, have thrown her into a very painful state, although not absolutely a dangerous one.

My purse did not require these fatal checks. In London, every visit from a physician of any reputation (and could I select any other for my friend?) costs a *louis*. This is indeed purchasing uneasiness at a dear rate.

My resources are almost at an end; and not only I have not procured any redress of my grievances, but I cannot even obtain an answer from my lawyers. Thank God, however, Target is about to return to Paris, and promises to bring this cruel indecision to a speedy termination. I am promised the direction of an important work, which would supply my wants for a long time to come; but the speculation is yet very uncertain. Changuyon has also written from Holland,

to offer me some employment, but I must first insure time for the performance.

Take all this into consideration, my dear friend; merely trace the outlines of my situation, and your imagination will soon have drawn a very dark picture. However, my circumstances are not yet desperate. The sufferings of my friend are the only ills I endure. Your letter diminished their bitterness; judge, then, how necessary your friendship is for our happiness. Alas! my friend, there is only one true happiness—to love, and to be loved. Deprived of this charming illusion, I could no longer bear the fardels of life. But, let me reflect that I am writing from London, and in the month of November—I must not busy myself with such thoughts. I will, however, tell you—but purely with literary motives—what I have found on this subject in the "*Sejanus, of Bergerac,*" printed in 1638, and dedicated to the Duke d'Arpajan. By-the-by, atheism

is professed in this work, with the approbation and privilege of the king. I found, then, the following verses, which surprised me not a little:—

"Death is absolutely nothing.—It is merely the termination of our birth.

"One is not chained to the misfortunes of life.—The soul of the most unfortunate being is in his own hands."

Better verses than the two last could not be written in our times. But there are others equally powerful. Terentranus asks Sejanus, if he fear not the thunder of the immortal Gods; and Sejanus replies:—

"Thunderbolts never fall during winter upon the earth;

"I have six months, at least, before me to scoff at the Gods."

I am not, I can assure you, enthusiastically disposed towards England; and I now know enough of this country to tell you, that, if her constitution be the best known, its ad-

ministration is the very worst possible: if the Englishman be the most free individual on the globe, the English people are one of the least free that exist. I will even go farther: and my opinion is, that, individually speaking, we are better than they. The land which produces grapes is superior to that in which coal is found, even by moral influences. I will not say, like Monsieur de Lauraguais, that the only fruit the English possess are roasted apples, and the only polished thing they have is steel; but they have nothing in them to justify the ferocious pride which they manifest upon all occasions. What, then, is liberty; since the little that is found, in one or two good laws, places a people, in other respects so little favoured by nature, in the very first rank? What cannot a constitution effect, since this one, although incomplete and defective, preserves, and, for some time, will continue to preserve, the most corrupt people on the face of the earth?

How great must be the influence of a few favourable *data* over mankind, when this people, ignorant, superstitious, headstrong — (observe, this is actually the case,) — grasping, and almost of Carthaginian character, are better than most others known, because they enjoy some civil liberty? The man, who thinks and reflects upon the nature of things, will exclaim—"How admirable!" He who does not, will have found an insolvable problem. Do not, however, imagine that this country is known; the more I think of it, the more I am convinced that we comprehend only what we can see. I defy you to form an idea of the ridiculous prejudices which exist respecting England; sometimes calumniated, and then again praised to the skies, through the most disgraceful ignorance.

I am taking notes for you, and for myself. They will convince you of two facts: the first is, that the slightest deviation from truth leads a traveller to incalculably false

conclusions; the other, that we Frenchmen write many things, in exaltation of the English character, which, in reality, exist only in our eulogies. This observation has been confirmed this very day, by an unimportant circumstance in itself, but which will explain my meaning more fully.

But you must wait till to-morrow.

Vale et me ama.

LETTER XII.

Apprehensions for the Future—Calculating Spirit of the English—Reserve of English Women—Characteristic and Amusing Adventure.

London.

You are uneasy respecting me, my dear friend, and I can assure you that I am not without fears, both with regard to myself and my amiable companion.

I have two or three projects in view, which will enable me to subsist; but people are greatly in error respecting what is termed the generosity of the English. Accustomed as they are to *calculate* everything, they calculate talents and friendship; and many of their most celebrated writers have literally been starved to death. Only think what chance a foreigner runs!

One of the first things that forcibly strikes

a Frenchman, on his arrival here, is a spirit of order, method, and calculation. The *why* and *wherefore* can be given for every circumstance; and this does not entirely accord with our notions.

I must not infringe on the rights of my Henrietta, who intends to send you a description of the English ladies, whose stiff and reserved appearance did not, at first sight, much please her. She and I, however, do not agree upon this subject; and I cannot forget, that I have always been passionately devoted to English women: indeed, the lovely person who is with me is frequently taken for one, by the gentlemen, with whom, by-the-by, she is not dissatisfied. As for myself, I am told by every one, that I look as much like a Briton as any *Jack Rosbif* possibly can.

Our ladies got into rather an unpleasant adventure, a few days since. The weather being fine, they proceeded on foot from the

inn (the Bell) in Holborn, to Hatton-Garden—a short distance—where we had taken lodgings. They were dressed in the French fashion, and Henrietta's costume was particularly conspicuous. A mob collected, and we were followed. A certain ale-house Aristophanes began to sing and caper before us, to the great entertainment of the multitude. My friend, who had been accustomed to the tricks of the Amsterdam *canaille*, laughed most heartily; but her Parisian companion was excessively angry, and regretted the Halles.* I evinced the utmost coolness, but was not without apprehension as to how the matter might terminate.

Several well-dressed Englishmen, on horseback, struck at some of the fellows with their whips, and gave us advice, which, unfortunately, we could not understand. A French gentleman, as luck would have it, came up at

* The Paris Billingsgate.

this moment; he began to expostulate, probably in very indifferent English, and was laughed at for his trouble. However, he called a hackney coach off the stand; we got into it, and reached our lodging in safety. Next day, the enormous feathers on the ladies' head-dress were exchanged for the diminutive, but really becoming *chapeau Anglais.*

Adieu, my friend; let me hear from you as soon, and as often as possible.

M.

LETTER XIII.

Simplicity of the English Syntax—English Grammar described—Ears and Eyes do not equally comprehend the English Language—Variance between Orthography and Pronunciation—Difficulty of the latter—Multitude of Consonants—Copiousness and Power of the English Language.

London.

My lovely friend is a little out of order. She is now fast asleep; and perhaps before you have finished reading this letter, you will be in a similar situation. But it will be your own fault; the P. S. in your last letter requesting me to give you an opinion respecting the English language.

The reason why a foreigner can so easily learn to read this language, is the extreme simplicity of its syntax. That of the Hebrew, which is considered one of the most ancient languages mankind has used, is of a more

complicated nature. Properly speaking, the English have neither declensions, nor conjugations. To distinguish the number and the cases of their substantives, they have only one or two terminations, the difference of which is but trifling; one or two articles, which are real particles, often employed to express another meaning. Their adjectives are indeclinable. Their verbs have, in reality, only two tenses, the present and the perfect; and these two tenses are sometimes distinguished only by the pronunciation. All the others are formed by means of auxiliary verbs—to have, to be, to do, shall, will, &c., and all this may be learned, without any extraordinary effort, in five or six lessons.

The grammar of a language, the elements of which are so simple, cannot be very extensive. But what is particularly vexatious, is, that, having learned English tolerably well with your eyes, it is very possible that your ear may not comprehend a syllable. Not only,

I do not know a language the orthography of which agrees less with its pronunciation, but I know of none, the pronunciation of which is so difficult, so capricious, so uncertain. One would feel inclined to believe, that the writing and the pronunciation of this language are separated by a lapse of many centuries. "You write *bread*," said Madame Denis, Voltaire's niece, to her English master, "you pronounce *bred*: why don't you simply say, *du pain?*"—Thomas Sheridan, the father of the present orator, bears me out, in the preface to his Dictionary: "with regard indeed to the pronunciation of our tongue, the obstacles are great, and in the present state of things almost insuperable." But this author sees these obstacles only in the defective methods which, till then, had been followed, in teaching this language. Are not the very elements of which it is composed one of the causes of these obstacles? First, it has a great many consonants—more,

indeed, than are numbered in the alphabet: our *j*, is pronounced *edzh*, or *dzha*; our *c*, sometimes like a *k*, or an *s*, and even *sh*; *t*, is sometimes sounded *sh*, *ch*, &c. Now, the more consonants in a language, the more harsh and difficult its pronunciation. In English, our five vowels serve to designate twelve or fifteen totally different sounds. But, some of these sounds have the disadvantage of being very short; as *a*, in *hat*; *e*, in *bet*; *i*, in *fit*; *o*, in *not*; *u*, in *but*: all the others are real diphthongs, never so clear nor so decided, as that of a pure vowel, like our *i*, our *a*, our *o*. Add to this, the number of words that begin by *s*, or by *th*; which latter sound can only be pronounced by putting the tongue between the teeth.

It is not difficult to understand, that a language composed of so great a number of consonants, of short vowels, changeable diphthongs, must, more than any other, be uncertain and capricious in its pronunciation.

If there be a poverty, and, if I may say so, a kind of wildness, as to the primitive character of the elements and the grammatical arrangement of the English tongue, it cannot be denied, that it possesses wonderful energy, copiousness, boldness, and originality of expression. With whatever language you may be acquainted, you will find the greater part of it in the English dictionary. Johnson's is, I believe, the most extensive in existence; and yet other words will be added every time the work goes through a new edition: the last one boasts of having increased the number by twenty thousand. The language in which the Bible is written, possesses only seven or eight hundred words; and in all the operas of Quinault, there are not more than half that number.

The English have borrowed from the French almost all the expressions which belong to ceremony, ideas, customs, and the duties of society; but, if our eyes easily recognise the words, our ears do not enjoy

the same advantage; the pronunciation rendering them totally foreign. A considerable number, in crossing the channel, have also undergone much alteration from their primitive meaning.

The great facility which the English possess in appropriating foreign words, and the care they take to modify the pronunciation, being admitted, it must also be added, that these circumstances render their language harsh and barbarous. What Johnson said of the style of Spenser, may be aptly applied to its general character: — "He wrote no language, but has formed what Butler calls a Babylonish dialect in itself, harsh and barbarous; but made by exalted genius and intrinsic learning the vehicle of so much instruction, and so much pleasure, that, like other lovers, we find grace in its deformity."

And now, good night, my dear friend.— *Vale et me ama,*

M.

LETTER XIV.

Number of Handsome Persons in England—Loveliness of English Women—Thoughts on English Beauty—Pretty Women of Paris only half finished—The Cloudy Atmosphere of England favourable to the Complexion of its Inhabitants—English Beauty in want of Animation—Length of the English Head—English Ladies have two Left Hands.

London.

THERE probably do not exist, in any other part of Europe, so many handsome persons of both sexes as are to be met with here; particularly, such regular and perfect features. The kind of beauty you see in this country reminds one of a passage in Johnson, which I have often endeavoured but in vain to translate:—"To expand," he says, "the human face to its full perfection, it seems necessary that the mind should co-operate, by placidness of content or consciousness of supe-

riority. It appears, in fact, impossible to be so beautiful as an English woman, without habitually experiencing that placidness and serenity of mind which pre-suppose a perfect independence—an exemption from care and want—self command, superiority of mind, or strength of character.

Amongst this people, their features, the lines of their face, are more full, more finished, than those of the French, the Germans, or the Swiss. A character of mildness is particularly observable in their countenance—an air of repose and dignity, deprived of which beauty loses all its charms. In Paris, you would be inclined to think that nature had only half finished the faces of our pretty women, in order to afford them the means of varying or completing the work as they may think proper. An Italian gentleman, with whom I am acquainted, says, he never saw so many fine heads in all Italy, as he has seen in London and the neighbourhood. The

extreme whiteness of their skin shows their faces to much advantage; and probably, in this respect, the cloudy atmosphere of England is as favourable to their complexion as it is to their green lawns, and all kinds of verdure, rendering their gardens so delightful.

I cannot, however, refrain from observing, that English beauty possesses more brilliancy than attraction. At a distance, you are struck with the dazzling whiteness; but, if you approach, you wish for more vivacity, more animation. In the blood which circulates through those fine and delicate veins, there is more calmness than voluptuousness, more tenderness than love. The most common defect among these fine heads is, that they are too long; but, in other respects, they are perfectly formed. I cannot say so much of the shoulders. Many of the ladies wear badly made stays, which injure their back and bosom, and prevent the motion of their arms—the very circumstance, I have no doubt,

which made Lauraguais say, that English ladies had two left hands. All this is the more provoking, as we must be convinced that their shape is elegant and flexible; and, notwithstanding the ridiculous custom just mentioned, they still appear majestically lovely.

LETTER XV.

Agents of the French Police in London—Spies detected—Madame Du Barry, Voltaire, and the Archbishop of Paris.

London.

You will be surprised to hear, my dear friend, yet it is a fact too well authenticated to admit of a doubt, that the Paris police employ spies in London, and some of them natives of the country. Sir Gilbert Elliot has put me on my guard, and has pointed out two individuals who are in the pay of the French Government. I am perfectly indifferent as to what they may report, and have no doubt but they will attribute to me many of the violent publications which are daily issuing from the London press; but it is my decided intention, and my publisher agrees with me on that point, to put my name to everything that comes from my pen.

You will, I trust, be satisfied with two light productions which I shall send to Paris next week.

I shall feel extremely thankful if you will call upon T., and ask him to tease my lawyers until they do something for me. Apropos of lawyers—we have Monsieur De S. here, thanks to à *Lettre de Cachet.* He is a very pleasant companion, and lives near the Tower of London instead of the interior of the Bastile of Paris.

You may recollect reading with me the correspondence of that celebrated harlot, Madame Du Barry. Monsieur de S., who was upon terms of intimacy with one of her lovers—not, as you may suppose, Louis XV. —showed me, a few days ago, a copy, in her own handwriting, of the letters from Voltaire and the Archbishop of Paris, and her answers to those gentlemen. They are so essentially different from those we perused, that I am sure you will read them with pleasure.

For the present, *Vale.*

LETTER XVI.

Epitaphs on Sir Christopher Wren and Sir Isaac Newton —Falsehood and Presumption of Voltaire—Violation of Historical Truth, by Helvetius—Superiority of Fact over Fiction, strikingly exemplified in the Case of Prince Edward, the Pretender, and Macdonald, of Sky.

Hatton Street, London, December, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

EVERY one has heard of the celebrated epitaph of Christopher Wren, to be seen in the vault of St. Paul's, in London—"*Si monumentum quæris circumspice;*" but no one ever told you, that these four words are smothered amongst ten or twelve lines of execrable Latin, in which care has been taken not to forget the "*Eques aureatus,*" and many other very silly things. The same remark applies to Newton's epitaph—"*Sibi gratulentur mortalis tale tantum que ex-*

titisse humani generis decus." This is well enough; but it is preceded by eleven lines, in which is pompously announced the "*Eques aureatus*," the Commentary upon the Apocalypse, &c. Now, this recalls to my mind an anecdote, valuable to those who, like you and me, are hunting down human quackery. Voltaire has published, that, at Montpellier, there is a statue of Louis XIV., bearing this beautiful inscription—"*To Louis XIV. after his death.*" It unluckily happens, first, that the inscription is in Latin; secondly, that it is very long; thirdly, that it merely states the truth, namely, that the statue was ordered by the town, during the lifetime of Louis, XIV., and was erected after his death. *Superstiti decrevere, ex oculis sublato posuere.* And yet, Voltaire is presuming enough to exclaim in several of his writings, "This is the way in which history is written!" But a fact of more importance, and which I have been able to verify, is the following:—

Helvetius, in his work "*On the mind*," (vol. 2nd, page 138,) says:—"In this country, (Turkey,) magnanimity never triumphs over vengeance; you will never see in Turkey what happened a few years ago in England. Prince Edward, being pursued by the King's troops, found an asylum in a nobleman's house; this nobleman was indicted for having afforded refuge to the Pretender. He was brought before the judges, but, before he was questioned, he addressed them in the following terms:—'I ask, if any among you, had the Pretender taken refuge in his house, would have been so vile, or so cowardly, as to deliver him up to justice?' At this question, the judges remained silent; they arose from their seats; and the accused nobleman was set at liberty."

This fact, as it was called, appeared to me absurd; no tribunal upon earth has the right, or the power, to judge in this manner.

Well, I arrived in England, and, by chance,

I met Lady Margaret Macdonald, who resided, in 1763, at Edinburgh, with Macdonald of Kingborough, the hero of Helvetius's novel. Macdonald was not a nobleman : he was a country gentleman, in indifferent circumstances, and lived in the isle of Sky, in the vicinity of the mansion of his near relative, Sir Alexander Macdonald, to whom the greater part of this island belonged, and the chief of the Macdonald clan, which had testified the warmest attachment to the Pretender. The officers of the company in pursuit of the Pretender, who, they knew, was in the isle of Sky, were in the dining-room of the mansion, with Lady Margaret. A Highlander presented himself at the door of the room, and delivered to the lady an unsealed letter; she recognised the Pretender's handwriting; the fugitive requested of her a bottle of wine, a shirt, and a pair of shoes. The unfortunate Prince, worn out with fatigue, was, at that moment, sitting on a hill, a mile

from the mansion, and he might be seen from the windows. Lady Margaret did not lose her presence of mind. Under the pretext of some family affairs, she left the officers, and, accompanied by the Highlander, she proceeded, with all haste, to the house of Macdonald of Kingborough. "If the Prince enter your house," said Macdonald to her, "if you assist him in the slightest degree, you and your family are ruined for ever. Leave everything to me; Adieu!"

Macdonald, with the utmost difficulty, succeeded in saving the Pretender, whom he dressed up in female attire.

This prince proceeded to the mountains, and fortunately got on board one of the vessels which France had sent to cruise off the Western coasts of Scotland, in order to facilitate his escape. Shortly afterwards, Macdonald was arrested, and sent to prison in Edinburgh castle, where he remained some time before his trial took place. The only

defence he made, was by saying to his judges, "What I did for Prince Edward, I would have done for the Prince of Wales, if he had been placed in similar circumstances!"

The judges were not silent, as Helvetius says; but they sentenced Macdonald to be hanged, and, moreover, that his entrails and his heart should be thrown into a fire at the foot of the scaffold, his head cut off, &c. Macdonald did not undergo his sentence; as the Duke of Cumberland informed government, that this execution would alienate for ever the whole clan of Macdonald. He received his pardon, and he was kept during a twelvemonth, in Edinburgh castle.

Now, how different all this is. How true, simple, fine, grand! How much Macdonald and nature are losers by the recital of Helvetius!

Vale et me ama.

LETTER XVII.

Commerce of London—Illustrative Anecdote—Domestic Architecture—Banks of the Thames—Introductions—English Conversations—Threatened Lawsuit.

London.

You know that London itself has monopolized two thirds of the commerce of the three kingdoms. Do you wish to have an idea of the commerce of this vast city—this huge polypus? Follow me along the Strand, and, after having with difficulty squeezed through the crowded streets, take a boat at the Custom House, below London Bridge, and, rowing amongst thousands of vessels that cover the bosom of Old Father Thames—some departing for, others arriving from, the remotest parts of the globe—you will then allow, that you could not have formed a conception of the power with which human industry and liberty of action invest this really

great (I mean in the sense you will understand) and wonderful people. I must candidly acknowledge, that my mind is more sensibly affected, in witnessing these miracles of civilization, than it would be in beholding the most delightful pictures of simple nature. You cannot behold this superb river, bearing the real treasures which fable assigns to Pactolus, without thinking of the celebrated answer said to have been made by the citizens of London to some King, (I forget which,) who threatened, in consequence of their misbehaviour, to remove his Court from the Metropolis—"Sir, in withdrawing from this city, we hope your Majesty will leave the Thames behind." "*Se non è vero, è bên trovato.*"

I am not yet, and shall with difficulty get, accustomed to the architecture of their houses, of the most tiresome uniformity. The windows are often without frame-work, and seldom have shutters, at least outside: they

are merely holes, cut at right angles in the walls. Another custom, which must strike a foreigner, is that of having iron railings before every house: dismal and strong they appear. The Englishman, therefore, has more than one reason for calling his house, his castle. The fosse, behind which the houses are entrenched, no doubt, renders their iron *chevaux de frize* indispensable; but they are not, on that account, more pleasing to the sight. If they would gild, or paint them of a less sombre hue, they would not so much offend the eye.

You cannot enjoy the sight of this magnificent river, the Thames, from any part of the town except from the three bridges of London, Blackfriars, and Westminster. There are no quays; and, with the exception of Somerset House and the Temple, the sides of this fine river are covered with miserable hovels, old sheds, and habitations resembling fishermen's huts. The inhabitants have dis-

covered the secret of effectually blocking up those parts of the town that appear most susceptible of improvement. It is possible, however, that the quantity of mud, deposited by the flowing of every tide, would have prevented the opulent from erecting dwellings on the river's banks.

I have recently been introduced to some of the celebrated characters of the day, and will give you a few sketches in my subsequent epistles. Matter I have in abundance, to instruct and entertain you; but time, or the hands of Briareus, are not at my command.

I am heartily glad I have come to England. The conversation (and English gentlemen are generally well-informed persons) of some of the political leaders, will be of advantage to me. The information I am now obtaining will, I am certain, prove useful to me, and to my countrymen, at some future period, when the seeds which are now sown shall have sprung up.

Sir Gilbert Elliot, whom I met yesterday by chance, requests me to remember him to you.

By-the-by, I have got into a scrape, through my servant Hardy, which will end in a law-suit; and Sir Gilbert is my counsel.

Vale, my dear friend.

LETTER XVIII.

Remarkable Letters from Voltaire, Madame du Barry, the Archbishop of Paris, and the Duke of Orleans. —Prediction, by Louis XV.

London.

THE following letters are those I alluded to in a former epistle. The Countess is sufficiently severe. The mean cringing of Voltaire has met with a proper castigation.

Letter from Voltaire to Madame du Barry.

" Madame,

" I AM informed by Monsieur de la Borde, that you have desired him to kiss me on both cheeks—these kisses being sent by you.

" ' Quoi deux baisers sur la fin de ma vie !
Quel passeport vous daignez m'envoyer.
Deux c'en est trop ! Adorable Egérie ;
Je serois mort de plaisir au premier.'

" He placed your portrait in my hands,

and you will forgive me, Madame, I hope, when I inform you that I imprinted two kisses upon the beautiful resemblance—

"'Vous ne pouvez empêcher cet hommage,
Faible tribut de quiconque a des yeux,
C'est aux mortals d'adorer votre image
L'original étoit fait pour les Dieux.'

"M. de la Borde's Pandora has been mentioned to me: I think it worthy of your protection. The favours you bestow on genius are the only means of increasing the splendour of your name.

"Accept, Madame, the unfeigned respect of a poor solitary old man, whose heart feels no sentiments stronger than those of gratitude."

The Answer.

"NOTHING, Sir, can be more polite than the letter I have just received from you. I expected that the commission I gave M. de la Borde would have procured me the flattering acknowledgment you have sent me. It will form an excellent supplement to the

Apotheosis of King Petau.* These two pieces, united, will justify you, in the eyes of the public and of posterity, from the charge so frequently brought against you, namely, of partiality and contradiction.

"DU BARRY."

However, her letter to the Archbishop of Paris is, if possible, more insolent; but first read his brilliant effusion:—

From M. De Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris.

"January 15, 1774.

"MADAME,

"It is a duty incumbent on me to instruct those who are committed to my charge, and to employ every means which charity, directed by prudence, may suggest, to guide them into the paths of truth, when they have been led astray. You cannot sup-

* Voltaire had written some verses under this title, in which he had satirized, in the most indecent manner, the Countess and Louis XV.

pose, Madame, I am the only one unacquainted with a scandal which unfortunately is but too notoriously public. If the errors of a private person afflict me, how great must my concern be when I think of those into which you lead a prince, in other respects to be admired for his very eminent qualities. Your triumph is, undoubtedly, in the eyes of the world, very flattering; and I will allow there are few endowed with virtue sufficient to withstand it, or possessed of so much resolution as to be able, of their own accord, to renounce it. May I hope, Madame, that so sublime an effort is not superior to your strength? If your regard for the King were sincere, would you not give him the most striking proof of it, by conducting him in the way of salvation, and encouraging him to continue in it by your own example? Could you look upon a voluntary retirement as a humiliating exile, where such retirement would be the

means of reconciling you with heaven, and of making you partaker of the purest pleasures which can be tasted here below,—peace within yourself, and esteem with all good people? For to them you would have the justest title, since you would be the means of restoring to the state its King, and to religion a Christian and protector.

"Dissipated as may be the giddy circle within which you move, I cannot believe, Madame, that every spark of religion is extinguished within your breast. Condescend but to hearken for a moment to the monitor within you, and I have no doubt but the prayers I offer will be of avail; which are, that I may propose, as a pattern to his people, that King, who cannot doubt of my respect and attachment to his person.

"I am, &c.,

"CHAS. DE BEAUMONT."

The Answer.

"SIR,

"I see with pleasure your attachment to the King; but, notwithstanding all you say, I believe my own as real. It is true, I show it in a different manner—perhaps a more persuasive one. I could never have supposed you would apply to me, to work the change you so much desire. Your zeal would, without doubt, merit great praise, were there nothing worldly in it; but I am far from thinking you disinterested, because I am well informed of your project of marrying the King with an Archduchess; and I know that, should this alliance succeed through your means, you are certain to reap great advantages from it.

"If I have not courage sufficient to forward your pious design, I must own, Sir, your letter has made a very strong impression on me, notwithstanding what some persons have said, to whom I have shown it. To restore my conscience, drooping with alarms,

and to persuade me I was not so criminal as I feared I was, they would have had me believe that the most serious of my crimes would have been but venial sins, if I possessed the advantage which you, Sir, have experienced, to be directed by one of those sublime theologians, who could teach you to sin in so charming a manner with Madame de Moiran, that your apostolical soul was in no wise defiled by the pollutions of the body.

"In a word, Sir, although I could not comprehend all they said, I understood enough to discover, that there was an entrance into the way of salvation, more easily attainable, and better suited to my weakness, than that which you pointed out to me. If it be really so, you will oblige me much by making me acquainted with it; and you shall then see how earnestly I will set about the work of reformation.

"I am, with respect, &c.

"The COUNTESS DU BARRY."

From the Duke of Orleans.

"Oct. 21, 1773.

I WAIT with impatience, my charming Countess, to learn the result of the solicitation which you promised me to employ with the King, to engage his consent to my marriage with Madame de Monteson. The great interest you appeared to take in this affair, and your great credit with the King, had led me to hope I might be certain that it would be speedily brought to a happy issue. It was, you know, only with this prospect that you determined me to return to Court. Since that time, things remain just as they were. It is certain, my dear Madame, you have not done all in your power. Yet I cannot think that a pair of such sweet lips as yours are, could ever utter a promise with intention to break it. Such conduct is inconsistent with that amiable freedom you have always exercised towards me; and I can see no reason

why I should be the only person you should treat with insincerity.

"I am, &c.

"LOUIS P. DUKE OF ORLEANS."

I have much to say respecting the writer of this last letter, which will be quite new to you. I think Louis XV. was nearly right, when he said that the monarchy would last during his lifetime, and not much longer. Unless some very great change take place—which I shall endeavour to effect, by writing, and in every other possible way—Louis the Sixteenth will be the last monarch who will reign over the destinies of France.

If I had time, I would enter into further particulars; another day I will do so.

Adieu!

M.

LETTER XIX.

Pleasant Invitation — Rural Fete—Water Party—Grand English Dinner—Statue of William Walworth—The Fishmongers' Company—Ball, Supper, and Conclusion of the Feast.

London.

I SPENT a charming day on the 15th instant. I received a letter from Madame de M., in which, without entering into any explanation, she requested me to call at her country seat, as soon as possible. It is beautifully situated on the banks of the Thames. On my arrival, I was shown into the park, and, under a very large oak-tree, I observed a number of tables covered with every luxury imaginable. Scarcely had I commenced paying my respects to the noble Amphytrion, when the sound of music drew my attention to the river, whence it proceeded—some eight or ten handsome boats, and a splendid

barge, had now reached the shore. About thirty men, and as many well dressed ladies, landed under a salute of guns, and the sound of French horns. They were soon seated at the tables, one of which was assigned to the thirty sailors or watermen, who were dressed in uniform, with curious caps, and large breastplates. At their table, as you may imagine, the greatest number of bottles (empty ones I mean) were to be seen.

When the repast had terminated, I was invited to accompany the noblemen: we entered the richly-decorated barge, and, thanks to the energetic vivacity of our joyous boatmen, we soon passed through Chelsea, Westminster, and Blackfriars bridges.

Reaching London bridge, our barge stopped, and we were led through a passage, not very splendid, into a large handsome hall, and thence, into another room, where we left our hats and canes. We were then shown the Council chamber, the Assembly,

and Dining rooms. The latter is remarkably large, well proportioned, and about the heighth of the saloon of Marly. The windows, looking upon the river, render it extremely cheerful. A gallery, sufficiently large to accommodate several hundreds of spectators, goes round the room, and, at one extremity, is an orchestra. Dinner was announced: Figure to yourself a very long table, in the form of a horse-shoe, with a hundred and thirty or forty covers. The President was seated at the head, upon a sort of Curule chair; on his right, the lady of the nobleman, my friend; on his left, the nobleman himself, the wife of the chairman, and other ladies.

To give you an idea, once for all, of what a good English dinner is composed, you must know, that, after turtle soup, which is very rich, highly spiced, and highly prized, comes the first course, consisting solely of the best kinds of fish—salmon, trout, turbot, and lobster-sauce of every kind and colour.

The second service was of meat, game of different sorts, particularly venison, the fat of which is considered most delicious; notwithstanding which, they add a sort of rich sweet jelly to it, made of currants. The third service was of custard and fruit tarts, puddings, &c.; and the whole was terminated by the finest dessert England could afford—delicious pine apples, excellent ices, and the rarest French and Spanish wines.

Besides this dinner, on a sideboard was placed an enormous piece of beef, over which were suspended the national colours: and this is what is called a baron of beef.

What do you think struck me most at this dinner? The activity, the grave deportment of four old beadles, dressed in a heavy livery, who waited upon us. What equally surprised me was a terrific statue, of painted wood, rudely sculptured, but representing a marked countenance, holding a naked dagger in its hand. This almost colossal statue occupied a recess behind the President's chair.

I could not rest until I ascertained what remarkable man it might be intended to represent. One of my neighbours informed me that it was no less a person than William Walworth, Lord Mayor of London, formerly a member of the society in which I had the honour to dine, and who, in the reign of Richard the Second, killed, with his own hand, Wat Tyler, a celebrated rebel chief; an exploit by which his King and country were preserved.

The dagger, or sword, is taken great care of, and on certain days it is removed from the scabbard. Such was the case in the present instance. You will perhaps imagine, that we were celebrating some festival of knighthood, and that this repast had been prepared in honour of the occasion. The order, however, though a very ancient one—probably the most ancient in this country—is not one of knighthood. To this and to some other associations, England may owe her prosperity: the greatest lords of the

kingdom, Princes of the blood, Kings themselves, have been admitted members, and deemed it a high honour.

Well, have you guessed what order this can be? I am certain you have not, and therefore I will at once tell you, that it is neither more nor less than the corporation of *Fishmongers*, who enjoy certain privileges, and are the richest body of men in the city of London. The enormous income they possess is a secret preserved amongst themselves, but it is said to exceed 120,000*l.* a year. It is known, for instance, that they possess, in Ireland, property exceeding sixteen or eighteen thousand acres. I believe that the greater part of this immense wealth is employed in charitable purposes.

My noble friend having expressed a wish to be admitted a member of this corporation, was unanimously elected; and this grand *fête* was given in consequence of his reception. When dinner was over, several large silver ewers, filled with rose water, were

placed upon the tables: each guest dipped a corner of his napkin in the vase—a delightfully refreshing oriental custom, I can assure you.

While coffee was served in an adjoining apartment, that in which we had dined was suddenly converted into a ball-room, and it delighted my heart to see these worthy fishmongers, their wives, and daughters, dancing with lords, Spanish grandees, French dukes, and German highnesses. These excellent fellows were determined we should not starve; a splendid supper was prepared—and the bowls of punch were not forgotten. I retired very late—arose next day very late, having a violent head-ache; a complaint with which I am assured these brave fishmongers are never tormented, being accustomed to such mixtures as turtle soup, currant jelly, lobster sauce, custards, callipash, pine apples, punch, claret, and rose-water.—*Vale et me ama.*

M.

LETTER XX.

Introduction to John Wilkes—Injustice of French Writers towards Lord Chatham—The Abbé Raynal's Character of his Lordship—Chatham's Monument in Westminster Abbey—Chatham's Eloquence formed from that of Demosthenes—Chatham, as an Orator, the Model of Mirabeau—Junius's Eulogy on Chatham—Retentiveness of Memory, and Powers of Imitation—Three Characters of Lord Chatham.

London, May 12.

I WAS yesterday presented to a gentleman with whose celebrity you must in some degree be acquainted—Mr. John Wilkes, a Member of Parliament, and Chamberlain of London. His country is indebted to his exertions in the grand cause of liberty. I shall have several opportunities of mentioning him in my subsequent letters. The name of Lord Chatham being mentioned, Mr. Wilkes remarked, that the French writers had not done justice to that great man; he had been

described as having lavished the treasures of the country in order to satisfy his own ambition, &c.

I assured him that he was in error: some hired scribblers, it was true, had attacked his measures, but the real friends to freedom were warm in their praises of the patriot, and held him up as an example to the French ministers—an example of no earthly use to them; for, if they had the wish they had not talent sufficient to comprehend the measures of that great man. The Abbé Raynal, I added, has spoken of Chatham in terms which I perfectly recollect, and which you will not perhaps be displeased if I communicate.—These are his words:—"William Pitt—the favourite of the three kingdoms from his youth, for his integrity, his disinterestedness, his zeal against corruption, his inviolable attachment to the interests of his country—had a passion for great things, was possessed of an eloquence that was irresistible, and a

genius that was at once enterprising and steady. His ambition was to raise his country above all the world, and himself along with her. Till the administration of Mr. Pitt, all the enterprises of his nation in distant countries were unfortunate; and they could not be otherwise, because they were ill-concerted. But his projects were formed with such wisdom and utility,—his preparations were made with such forecast and expedition,—he so justly proportioned the means to the end,—he made so wise a choice of those in whom he was to repose confidence,—he established such harmony between the land and the sea-service,—in short, he raised the heart of England so high, that his administration was nothing but a chain of conquests. His soul, still greater, looked down with contempt upon the idle clamours of those timid spirits who charged him with squandering the public money. He answered, in the words of Philip, the father of Alexander, 'Victory

must be purchased with money, not money saved at the expense of victory.' "

Mr. Wilkes appeared much pleased, and asked me if I had visited Westminster Abbey, where Chatham's remains had been deposited. On my answering that I had visited only that part which is called the Poet's Corner, he said he should feel pleasure in accompanying me to the tomb of that truly surprising man. This day, he added, is the anniversary of his death ; he expired on the 11th of May, 1778. The citizens of London requested permission to bury him in Saint Paul's ; but the favour was denied, and his ashes repose among those of the sovereigns of his country in Westminster Abbey : his grave is about sixty feet from the North entrance ; and the inscription upon his monument is simple and appropriate : it is as follows :—

" As a testimony to the virtues and ability of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, during whose administration, Divine Providence exalted Great Britain to a height of Prosperity and Glory unknown to any former ages."

It is said of Lord Chatham, that he had taken Demosthenes as a model in speaking—that he had translated some of his orations several times over, and committed them to memory. Should I ever be called upon to perform a part in liberating my country from slavery, Chatham shall be my model. I feel an enthusiastic respect for this orator which I cannot describe; and this has been increased by the three following tributes, which have been presented to me by Mr. Wilkes, and which I suspect to be his own writing; although the style of each is different. I had read Lord Chesterfield's, Burke's, and Junius's eulogies —the last of which terminates thus:

"Recorded honours shall gather round his monument, and thicken over him. It is a solid fabric, and will support the laurels that adorn it."

Mr. Wilkes was acquainted with a gentleman whose retentive powers were such, that he could, on returning from one of the debates, write down, nearly *verbatim*, all

that had been said. This gentleman is now in Calcutta, or I should have requested him to give me an imitation of the great minister; his talent that way, I am assured, being so great, that you might mistake the copy for the original. However, I have got the two speeches, and shall learn them by heart.*

The following are the papers given me by Mr. Wilkes:—

Lord Chatham.

"He was born an orator, and from nature possessed every outward requisite to bespeak respect, and even awe. A manly figure, with the eagle eye of the famous Condé, fixed your attention, and almost commanded reverence the moment he appeared; and the keen lightning of his eye spoke the high respect of his soul before his lips had pronounced a syllable. There was a kind of fascination in his look, when he eyed any one askance. Nothing could withstand the force of that contagion. The fluent Murray has faltered, and even Fox shrunk back appalled from an adversary 'fraught with fire unquenchable,' to use Milton's expression. He had not the correctness of language so striking in the great Roman orators, but he had the *verba ardentia*, the bold glowing words."

"Those who have been witnesses to the wonder of

* *Vide* APPENDIX, A.

his eloquence,—who have listened to the music of his voice, or trembled at his majesty,—who have seen the persuasive gracefulness of his action, or have felt its force;—those who have caught the flame of eloquence from his eye,—who have rejoiced at the glories of his countenance, or shrunk from his frowns, will remember the resistless power with which he impressed conviction. To those who never heard nor saw this accomplished orator, the utmost effort of imagination will be necessary to form a just idea of that combination of excellence which gave perfection to eloquence: his elevated aspect commanding the awe and mute attention of all who beheld him; while a certain grace in his manner, conscious of all the dignities of his situation, of the solemn scene he aided in, as well as his own exalted character, seemed to acknowledge and repay the respect he received:—his venerable form bowed with infirmity and age, but animated by a mind which nothing could subdue:—his spirit shining through him, arming his eye with lightning, and clothing his lips with thunder; or if milder topics offered, harmonizing his countenance in smiles, and his voice in softness; for the compass of his power was infinite. As no idea was too vast, no imagination too sublime for the grandeur and majesty of his manner, so no fancy was too playful, nor any allusion too comic, for the ease and gaiety with which he could accommodate it to the occasion. But the character of his oratory was dignity; this presided throughout; giving force because securing respect, even to his

sallies of pleasantry. This elevated the most familiar language, and gave novelty and grace to the most familiar allusions; so that in his hand the crutch became a weapon of oratory, the *telum oratoris*.* This extraordinary personal dignity, supported on the basis of his well-earned fame, at once acquired to his opinions an assent which is slowly given to the arguments of other men. His assertions rose into proofs, his foresight became prophetic. Besides the general sanction of his character, and the decisive dignity with which he pronounced his sentiments, it was always well known that he carefully cultivated the most authentic channels of information. But, as the activity of his public zeal stimulated him to such exertion, so the superiority of his genius directed him to higher sources. For other men even the mechanical medium of official knowledge is a sphere too laborious. Though Lord Chatham's duty did not disdain, his spirit soared above such little adventitious advantages: his was intelligence in a truer sense, and from the noblest source—from his own sagacious mind. His intuition, like faith, seemed superior to the common forms of reasoning. No clew was necessary to the labyrinth illuminated by his genius. Truth came forth at his bidding, and realized the wish of the philosopher—she was seen and beloved."

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* "You talk, my lords, of conquering America — of your numerous friends there to annihilate the Congress—and your powerful forces to disperse her army;—I might as well talk of driving them before me with this crutch."

"The secretary stood alone — modern degeneracy had not reached him. Original and unaccommodating, the features of his character had the hardihood of antiquity. His august mind overawed majesty; one of his sovereigns thought royalty so impaired in his presence, that he conspired to remove him, in order to be relieved from his superiority. No state chicanery, no narrow system of vicious politics, no idle contest for ministerial victories, sunk him to the vulgar level of the great; but overbearing, persuasive, and impracticable, his object was England—his ambition was fame. Without dividing, he destroyed party; without corrupting, he made a venal age unanimous. France sunk beneath him. With one hand he smote the house of Bourbon, and wielded in the other the democracy of England. The sight of his mind was infinite, and his schemes were to affect, not England, not the present age only, but Europe and posterity. Wonderful were the means by which these schemes were accomplished; always seasonable, always adequate, the suggestions of an understanding, animated by ardour and enlightened by prophecy.

"The ordinary feelings which make life amiable and indolent—those sensations which soften, allure, and vulgarise—were unknown to him: no domestic difficulties, no domestic weakness, reached him; but, aloof from the sordid occurrences of life, and unsullied by its intercourse, he came occasionally into our system to counsel and decide.

"A character so exalted, so strenuous, so various, so authoritative, astonished a corrupt age, and the Treasury trembled at the name of Pitt through all her classes of venality. Corruption imagined, indeed, that she had found defects in this statesman, and talked much of the inconsistency of his glory, and much of the ruin of his victories; but the history of his country, and the calamities of the enemy, answered and refuted her.

"Nor were his political abilities his only talents. His eloquence was an æra in the senate; peculiar and spontaneous, familiarly expressing gigantic sentiments and instinctive wisdom; not like the torrent of Demosthenes or the splendid conflagration of Tully; it resembled sometimes the thunder and sometimes the music of the spheres. Like Murray, he did not conduct the understanding through the painful subtilty of argumentation; nor was he, like Townshend, for ever on the rack of exertion; but rather lightened upon the subject, and reached the point by the flashings of his mind, which, like those of his eye, were felt, but could not be followed.

"Upon the whole, there was, in this man, something that could create, subvert, or reform; an understanding, a spirit, and an eloquence to summon mankind to society, or to break the bonds of slavery asunder; and to rule the wilderness of free minds with unbounded authority: something that would establish or overwhelm empires, and strike a blow in the world that should resound through its universe."

LETTER XXI.

The English Constitution—Power of the King to create Peers—Elections—Corrupt Traffic in Boroughs—Lord Sunderland's Proposal for limiting the Number of the Peerage—Good and Bad Kings—Injustice and Incapacity of French Writers respecting England.

London.

I PERCEIVE by your pamphlet, that, in speaking of the English Constitution, you assert what is not the case, when you say "that the elections are entirely under the control of the King." The Sovereign has the power to create a peer whenever he chooses, and consequently has a right to send any one who is friendly to his interests to the Upper House; but, over elections the King has no command.

I am sure you will pardon me for telling you, that many mistakes have slipped into

your publication; mistakes which you will now have an opportunity of rectifying.

You perhaps do not know that one of the greatest defects (*vices*) in the British constitution is, that members hold their seats by being elected for boroughs and not for counties; that all these boroughs are more or less corrupt—that is, are bought and sold—and that some do not possess more than ten or twenty elective votes. Judge, then, what predominating power a minister possesses, when, by the means of money alone, he is able to command a preponderating number of votes, enabling him to carry any bill he pleases.

In the Upper Chamber, it is also a great error in not having limited the number of members. Indeed, in the year 1718, such was the intention. The Earl of Sunderland, says Johnson, proposed an act, called the Peerage Bill, by which the number of Peers should be fixed, and the King restrained from

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any new creation of nobility, unless when an old family should be extinct. To this the Lords would naturally agree; and the King, who was yet little acquainted with his own prerogative, and, as it is now well known, almost indifferent to the possessions of the Crown, had been persuaded to consent. The only difficulty was found among the Commons, who were not likely to approve the perpetual exclusion of themselves and their posterity. The tendency of the Bill, as Steele observed, in a letter to the Earl of Oxford, was to introduce an aristocracy; for a majority in the House of Lords, so limited, would have been despotic and irresistible.

Yet, in my opinion, some measure, I do not say so sweeping as the above, will be again proposed at some future period, and very probably carried. This power, entrusted to the King, if the King be a good man, is beneficial, and may be of great service to the country upon many occasions. But, if the mo-

narch should be a bad one? Why, after all, a despotic government, you will say, is the most effectual—that under which people are most happy, if the sovereign be a virtuous man. Yes, my friend, but if, (that eternal *if!*) he should prove to be the reverse—more frequently the case than otherwise—What then?

A lady, lovely and well-informed—(education among all classes is particularly attended to, and females here would make some of our pretenders to learning blush at their ignorance)—a lady, I say, who is as well acquainted with French as she is with her own language, having persused your pamphlet, made the following remarks, with which I hope you will not be offended:—

"You French gentlemen come over here—remain a few weeks or months in London—return to Paris, write books or letters (this was a cut at me!) in which we are excessively ill-treated, or injudiciously praised. The

truth is, if you wish to see us in all our perfection, it is to the country you must repair; there you will remark, that each individual has a particular way of living.* We cannot be sketched in a wholesale way; but, in retail, you will find an endless variety. Visit Bristol, Liverpool, or Birmingham; dine at our farm-houses; call upon my relatives; you will see ladies walking five or six miles for the purpose of relieving some distressed family—and this in perfect secrecy. Schools of charity, and hospitals, you will remark supported only by voluntary subscriptions. You will see mothers of families, who would shudder at the idea of putting their children out to be nursed."

But enough of this. You would not have had this scolding, only I was compelled to make a solemn promise to *la belle Anglaise*, that I would repeat to you the substance of

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* Chaque particulier a sa maniere d'être à soi.

her conversation. She desires me to add, that she readily forgives the satirical composition; but hopes, when you pay a visit to this country a second time, that she shall have it in her power to make you think differently. You have only seen England, she says, running and galloping along, as dogs, while lapping up the water of the Nile.

Vale, amicissimum caput, et me, quod facis, ama: iterum vale.

M.

LETTER XXII.

Horses in London—Dean Swift's Houyhnhnms—Ladies' Wigs—False Hair in the Time of Shakspeare.

London.

I WILL make enquiries about the two horses: they are dear, but nothing can equal their beauty.

It was natural enough to imagine the story of the Houyhnhnms in this country. Swift would never have conceived such an idea, had he been a native of France or of Germany. There are, I firmly believe, as many horses in London as there are inhabitants; they are as clean as the human species—cleaner than many of the Yahoos; and, from the manner in which these quadrupeds are treated, you would be puzzled to know whether they serve the bipeds, or whether the bipeds are not destined to serve them.

A wig also for a lady! I will send you one, and of a colour not to be met with in all Paris—a beautiful light-brown—the fair hazled-eyed daughters of Britain call it auburn. But you will spoil it with your vile powder.

False hair is by no means a new fashion in this country. Morryson, describing the dress of English ladies in Shakspeare's time, has the following quaint expressions:—"Gentlewomen virgins weare gownes close to the body, and aprons of fine linnen, and go bare headed, with their hair curiously knotted and raised at the forehead, but many, against the cold, as they say, weare caps of hair that is not their own,"

Adieu!

LETTER XXIII.

Catholics, Methodists, Quakers, and Churchmen — Language of the Pulpit — Sunday in London — Quiet of the Country—English Pine-Apples and Grapes — English Stables and French Hotels — Houyhnhnms and Yahoos — English and French Noblemen compared—Fate of the French Aristocracy predicted, in the Event of a Revolution—English Landlords and Tenants—Projected Tour.

London.

I HAVE never, until a few days since, had so many chances of finding out the best way of offering up prayers to Heaven. Early in the morning, I went to the Spanish Catholic Chapel; thence I proceeded to a Methodist Conventicle, where I soon got tired to death with their common-place, austere, minute, moral lecture. I afterwards remained half an hour in a Quakers' Meeting, waiting impatiently for the manifestation of the Spirit. In this expectation I was disap-

pointed. I terminated my pious wanderings by entering a temple devoted to the service of the Church of England; and I was extremely edified with the modest gravity of the preacher, and the quiet respectful attention of the congregation.

What a remarkable difference between the language of the pulpit and that in common use! The former I could, in a great measure, understand; the latter is as unintelligible as the hissing of a boa constrictor.

Sunday, in London, is more of a Sunday than in Paris. This day is entirely separated from all others in the week; or, as Romilly calls it, a *dies non*. It is entirely devoted to rest, divine worship, or tranquil enjoyments. Respectable persons — I may say tradesmen—rise later, perhaps, on the week-days than on a Sunday; and, on this account, service commences at eleven, and their domestic occupations must have terminated before that hour; the afternoon being generally

spent in the country. It is there that the English seek for happiness and quiet, nowhere to be found unless in the grave; but there, at least, they obtain a greater portion than is to be met with in their smoky metropolis.

I was invited, a fortnight since, to dine with Mr. S. Our friend H. was of the party. The distance of his cottage, as he is pleased to call it, is about ten miles from town, and, notwithstanding Lauraguai's assertion, I never tasted better pine-apples, nor sweeter grapes; produced, it is true, in hot houses, which are kept in as much order as the *boudoir* of a pretty woman.

Speaking of order, cleanliness, and comfort, nothing is more wonderful than the stables of the English: they are positively cleaner than most of the Paris hotels. I know not whether Swift ever visited France: if he did, there he found prototypes in abundance, for his Yahoos; and here models innumerable for his Houyhnhnms.

Mark the difference between an English and a French nobleman. The former, when his fortune is impaired, and he is reduced to the necessity of curtailing his expences, flies to London, where he can remain in comparative obscurity; or he may travel; for to him, this would be economy, as he does not remain on his estate, unless he can keep up a dignified appearance. The Englishman, therefore, when in the country, is surrounded by tenants who derive advantage from his presence. The Frenchman, on the contrary, retires to his *château*, when compelled by adverse circumstances; to this retreat, he carries his ill-humour along with him, and his appearance is dreaded by his peasantry, as he is then obliged to act with more severity than usual, in the collecting of his rents.

Should a revolution, or civil war, break out in France, I tremble for the aristocratical branches of the kingdom; their

châteaux will be reduced to ashes, and blood will be spilt in torrents. The English yeoman, the tenant of almost every landholder, would, I am inclined to think, defend his lord to the last extremity. He, probably, loves and respects him; he would have every thing to lose by his ruin. Not so with the French serf. He would feel delighted in getting rid of feudal injustice, were it even at the expense of his master's life.

I am going to-morrow on a tour of pleasure, with Sir G. Elliot. We are to visit Windsor, Oxford, and I know not how many other places. You shall hear from me on my return; in the mean time, *Vale.*

M.

LETTER XXIV.

Windsor—Alleged Sublimity of the View from the Terrace much exaggerated—Windsor Castle—Chivalry and Feudality—Interior of the Castle—Cartoons of Raphael—Beauties of the Reign of Charles II.—Vandyke, Holbein, and Genario.

London.

We arrived at Windsor, and proceeded immediately to visit the celebrated terrace, eighteen hundred feet in length. The view from it is the richest and most extensive I ever beheld.

"Here in full light the russet plains extend."

But the sublimity of the spectacle it is said to present, has been much exaggerated. Descriptions generally lead one into error; and therefore I avoid them in my letters to you—merely a few sketches—your brilliant fancy is more likely to complete the *tableau*.

Now, this superb and boasted landscape is neither so majestic as the Alpine scenery of Switzerland;—neither so cheerful, nor so romantic, as the winding banks of the Thames;—nor of such Arcadian loveliness, as the enchanting valley of Richmond. Too extensive a view is like unlimited power: it never can belong to any body; it fatigues the imagination without satisfying the mind.

The castle itself is fine, only because it is vastly great, and venerably antique. You are aware that William the Conqueror laid the foundations of this mighty edifice, upon which you cannot fail to observe the marks of chivalry and feudality. In no part of Europe have so many feudal customs been retained as in this country; nor in any other where their forms have blended themselves with a system of liberty. It is from ancient decorations that the splendour and majesty of the throne are composed. But this splendour, this majesty, which constitute the pre-

servation and respect of public power, are always in favour of the laws, and never against them.

The interior of the castle is far from being magnificent. The furniture is old, worn out, and in the very worst taste. But here are the seven celebrated Cartoons of Raphael. These sublime sketches, although merely painted in water colours, upon paper, are in a high state of preservation. The conception of the painter appears in all its freshness, in all its energy, in all its purity. Were I a painter, it would be at the foot of such *chefs-d'œuvre* that my studies should commence. It is there that the imagination would best learn either to increase or moderate the fires of genius. There, too, talent will grasp all the mysteries, all the resources of art.

The Cartoon representing Paul preaching to the Athenians, is that which struck me most forcibly. What a brilliant conception

—what an *ensemble*—what a variety in its composition! There are not two figures alike, with regard to attitude, look, or manner: all are in perfect keeping; not one but possesses all that nature or dignity could bestow.

After these magnificent paintings, which we could not sufficiently admire, you will easily perceive that we did not observe many things in the other galleries worthy of attention. However, we stopped to look at some of the Beauties of the reign of Charles II. —some superb Vandykes, a portrait of Henry VIII., by Holbein, frightfully true to nature—a few paintings by Genario, none of whose compositions I had ever seen before. They must be very scarce, and are not without considerable merit.

To-morrow we shall proceed on our journey. Adieu.

M.

LETTER XXV.

Visit to Herschel—The Georgium Sidus—Herschel's Person, Early Pursuits, &c.—Oxford—Architecture of the Colleges—Costume of the Students—Libraries, Paintings, &c.

We slept at Windsor, and, on the following morning, went to pay our respects to the famous astronomer, Herschel. The English still persist in calling the planet he discovered three years ago by the name of the *Georgium Sidus;* but Europe—indeed the whole world, more just to the philosopher than his country—have decreed that it shall bear his own name.

Herschel is between forty and fifty years of age; and his life has been of a chequered nature. He was born in Hanover. I believe his father was a musician. He entered the Hanoverian service, as a flute-player—became disgusted with the army—deserted—and came

over to England. Some nobleman engaged him to form a band. He afterwards became a music-master, and an organist; but his love for astronomy was so powerful, that he found means, when not occupied in his profession, to bring reflecting telescopes to perfection. He is now engaged in preparing one that will be forty feet in length. It will occupy him three or four years in completing.

Herschel received us with great kindness —talked to us upon astronomical subjects— and assured us, that, within these few months, he had made the discovery of a volcanic mountain in the moon. He tells us that the milky way is certainly composed of nebulous stars, and that they consist of several thousands. He is allowed a pension by Government. His anxieties and miseries are now at an end; and the remainder of his life he intends to devote to astronomical pursuits. In his studio, he has written, over the mantel-piece, the inscription of Gil Blas:—

"*Spes et fortuna valete, sat me lusistis, ludite nunc alios.*"

Next day we proceeded to Oxford, a small town, beautifully situated in a valley, through which the Thames and Isis flow. Nature seems to have formed this asylum expressly for the delightful enjoyment of study, for the active tranquillity of letters and arts. The town itself presents a most singular aspect: circumscribed within narrow limits, twenty or thirty palaces of different sorts of architecture—Gothic, Greek, modern—but all of them of a grand and imposing appearance, form conspicuous monuments. The houses which surround them are very small and plain.

In the streets, you scarcely see any one, save professors and students, wearing black gowns and scarfs; on their heads a square flat cap; the kind of tuft, which is in the middle, looking like a nail that has been driven through this little black board into their learned heads —or heads that may one day become so.

It is impossible not to be impressed with profound respect, in contemplating all these superb monuments raised for purposes of learning; some by kings, others by their ministers; some, again, by private citizens, whose gratitude or vanity led them to immortalize the benefits they had received.

In each of these colleges are to be found a considerable library, precious collections of manuscripts, paintings, and illustrations of natural history.

In that superb building, Christ Church College, I remarked a few interesting paintings of the Italian school; among others, a Saint John, by Raphael; a Vision of Saint Francis, by Annibal Carrachi; and several Titians.

M.

LETTER XXVI.

Conversation with a Philanthropic English Divine—National Animosity of the English towards the French unjustly fostered—Historical Illustration from Froissart—Illiberal Sentiments of the Bishop of St. David's contrasted with the Benevolent Exhortation of the Archbishop of Paris—Future Friendship between France and England, and its Important Consequences predicted.

London.

I HAVE had a long and interesting conversation with Dr. Brown, an eminent professor of one of the colleges;—the intimate friend of the clergyman I mentioned in a former letter, as having travelled with us in the same carriage from Brighthelmstone.

The learned professor has less than is usual of the reserve natural to Englishmen, and so provoking to a foreigner.

Amongst other topics, we freely discoursed on the national character of the English and

French. "We are now at peace," said I, "and I believe it is the wish of my countrymen to become sincere friends with the English people; but you entertain not the same feeling towards us. You are an incomprehensible people: the enemy you boast of conquering, you affect to despise: one Englishman, you are continually saying or writing, can beat three Frenchmen; because you are a more moral race of men, you possess more true courage, and your physical power is infinitely greater. Now, if this be true, what little merit, on your part, when a French regiment lays down its arms to a British one! And then, again, what dishonour attaches to you when the matter is reversed, and an English *corps* is taken prisoner by an enemy numerically not more powerful! That such opinions should exist, and be fostered amongst the low, the vulgar, is not, to me, a subject of complaint; but when I see ministers, lords of the realm, and the heads of the clergy,

manifesting and promulgating such unworthy notions—endeavouring, with all their power, to keep up the hatred and spirit of rivalship existing between the two nations—I lose all patience. What shall I say of that reverend divine, the Bishop of St. David's, who, on the 30th of July, of this year, 1784, preached a sermon to the Lords, assembled in Westminster Abbey, of which the following is an extract?—

"'But it happened, that at a chosen opportunity, and at the exact moment when this country had exhausted great part of its strength, and when we were under the pressure and discomfort of some untoward and unfavorable accidents, an enemy, always jealous of the prosperity of this nation, and watchful for occasions of accelerating the ruin and destruction of a rival people; having, all along, under the pretence of legal traffic and commerce, in spite of all remonstrance, and bound by respected professions

of friendship, most treacherously afforded every clandestine aid to our adversaries, chose at last the less dishonourable part, and declared openly and decidedly against us.

"'Yet, to save appearances, though it is now well known to have been long their premeditated object, and a settled plan of policy; all this was done under a plausible pretext, as they asserted, of assisting an injured people, and relieving a foreign nation from oppression. They, who, by the very nature of their constitution and government, rule over their own people with all the tyranny of arbitrary power, set themselves up, with the most barefaced effrontery, for the avowed patrons of the liberties of mankind. The mask was too easily seen through, and the gross fallacy immediately detected. It was clearly understood, that, having not the least concern in the quarrel themselves, they could have nothing so much in view, as their own private and paltry interests, their own unjusti-

fiable and ambitious pursuits and purposes. Nay, they are not only guilty of this mean act of treachery, far below the spirit of a brave and generous people; but, to second their own dishonourable views, they draw into their confederacy, either as active enemies or idle spectators, those who, by every tie of honour or gratitude, ought to have controlled their unwarrantable proceedings and designs.'

"During the long war between the French and English, respecting the succession to the Crown, Froissart remarks, that the English bore such inveterate hatred to the French, that several English knights wore a black patch upon one eye, having made the strange vow, not to see with that eye till they had signalized themselves in killing a Frenchman. One would be inclined to believe, that this same Bishop of St. David's is descended from one of these knights with the black patch; and that their

sentiments, excusable in some degree on account of the prejudices of an ignorant and barbarous age, called that of chivalry, have been faithfully transmitted to the prelate of the eighteenth century. Yes, undoubtedly, the political crimes which you meet with, in the modern history of France, are the work of her government, that is to say, of her ministers; because the nation is never consulted. But is it thus with regard to England; when the government is very often led into wars, both unjust and injudicious, by the popular clamours and prejudices of the nation? What may be the fate of a declaiming bishop, who in the temple of a God of peace and truth, has not feared to utter such words as *treachery*, *barefaced effrontery*, &c.? What would he say, if he were asked—'Was it French perfidy, which seized upon, in 1755, before any declaration of war, so many vessels sailing under the faith of treaties? Is it French

perfidy, which, for so many years, desolates with the conqueror's sword, thirty millions of Indians? Are they French or English, who govern, or rather rule with a rod of iron, and with all the tyranny of arbitrary power, those thirty millions of victims sacrificed to the love of power and of gold?'

"I fear not to ask—I appeal to every honest man in England—a country in which every thing that is good is excellent, whether the principles which dictated the fragment I have just quoted, do not deserve the contempt of all nations, and excite the horror of all wise men?

"Let the English compare this incendiary declaration of the Bishop of St. David's with the address of the Archbishop of Paris, which was published at the same time. This minister of the Gospel, after congratulating his countrymen on the peace which had been proclaimed, continues:—

"'And now, my brethren, and fellow

labourers, dismiss from your minds all feeling of animosity to those who have become your friends; let the two most enlightened nations on the globe set an example to the universe—let us shew that, henceforth, no other rivalship shall exist between us, save in effecting the greatest good, and thus rendering mankind happy by civilization.'"

The worthy Doctor listened to my observations with perfect good humour; and he so entirely approves of my feelings, that he proposes publishing a pamphlet upon the subject. "Years may pass away," said this excellent man, "before the two people will perfectly understand each other; but the day must come, when, in spite of their rulers, France and England shall command all nations to remain at peace, and the nations *shall* obey."

That my friend, the divine, may prove to be a true prophet, is, I can assure you, my firmest wish.—*Vale.*

M.

LETTER XXVII.

Literary Occupation—Expected Termination of a Law-suit—"A Year's Residence in England"—Influence of Body and Purse on Mind—The Writer's Deficiency in the Property of Order and Arrangement—Domestic Affairs—Robbery by a Servant—Perjury instigated by Revenge—Imprisonment for Debt—Sanguinary Character of the English Penal Code—Sir Samuel Romilly.

London.

My hands are quite full of literary occupation, and I am obtaining a comfortable subsistence. However, the labour I have to undergo is cart-horse like, as I have not been able to find a secretary to assist me in my lucubrations. The French who are here belong either to the nobility, and are proverbially ignorant and idle, or to the class of artizans, principally watchmakers, or silk-weavers. R. says, he has discovered a Swiss, of the name of Adam—not the first man—

who will act as a scribe. My hopes begin to be raised, respecting the termination of my law-suit. In that case, I shall return to Paris; and one of the first books I intend to publish will be, "*A Year's Residence in England.*" I have written to my different correspondents, requesting them not to destroy my letters dated from hence. They are merely rough sketches, thrown off in the greatest haste, filled perhaps with contradictory notions respecting this country and its inhabitants; but, whatever they may be, they bear the impress of the moment; and I, like many other worthy individuals, am guided in my opinions by the state of my mind, the health of my body, or, perhaps, to be more precise, by the fulness or emptiness of my purse. "I find it difficult," said La B., "to persuade a minister, who is in the act of digesting a delicious meal, that the people of an entire province are in a state of actual starvation!" This is certain, I feel more pleased

with myself, and with those around me, thanks to the fifty *louis* a-month I receive from my publisher. But, as I said before, keep these rattling bones—these skeletons—and some future day I will clothe them with flesh.

"Order is Heaven's first law." With regard to myself, it is painful that I cannot apply the axiom. Order, arrangement, and other such good qualities, I certainly do not possess. The want of them has brought me, and I fear will yet bring me, into very unpleasant situations. My little domestic affairs are so badly managed, that I am cheated and pilfered most unmercifully. A valuable manuscript, which I was about to publish, disappeared a short time after I had taken up my residence in Hatton-Garden. Suspicion fell upon my servant, Hardy. We had remarked, that, of late, he had been very constant in his visits to the Bell tavern; and that he indulged most freely in punch pota-

tions. I reproved him for these excesses, and could not understand whence he was supplied with cash. My Henrietta and her *femme de chambre* having, during his absence, examined his trunks, we discovered a quantity of linen, and other wearing apparel, which belonged either to me or my fair companion. He impudently asserted, that, in our hurry, when leaving Paris, these articles had been packed up in mistake in his portmanteau. Upon making further enquiry, we had every reason to suppose, that the manuscript in question had been sold to some amateur of autography. Hardy was, in consequence, taken before a London magistrate; and, after several examinations, he was committed to prison. His trial will take place very shortly. I, Henrietta, and her *femme de chambre*, were ordered to appear at the tribunal as witnesses against him.

A few days after his commital, I was arrested, at the suit of this same Hardy, for

a considerable sum of money which he had sworn I owed him. Revenge had prompted him to commit perjury. Sir Gilbert Elliot, to whom I immediately sent, extricated me from this awkward predicament; and he has kindly undertaken to manage the law-suit, which becomes the consequence of the villanous conduct of my servant. My English friends have expressed their regret in the kindest manner; and they did all in their power to console Henrietta, who fancied that some English Bastille was to become my future residence.

I have much to say upon the subject of the recovery of debts in this country—on imprisonment in general; but more particularly on the penal code of Britain. Draco and Co. must have presided, when such sanguinary laws were established. Blood, nothing but blood, or "pounds of flesh," are required by this humane people for every offence. Should Hardy be found guilty, he will suffer

death—the punishment awarded to the man who has butchered his own mother. Such laws ought to be revised; they are a disgrace to a civilized nation. I have before me a list of crimes—about forty in number—all punishable with death. The laws of the most despotic countries of Europe are merciful if compared with those which are in force here. Every sensible man to whom I have spoken upon this subject entertains a similar opinion; yet no one comes forward to abrogate the obnoxious laws. My excellent friend Romilly tells me, that he has been carefully studying the criminal codes of every nation in Europe. "Ours," he observes, "is the very worst; and, when the plan I have in view is sufficiently matured, I intend not to rest upon my pillow until these laws, worthy of anthropophagi, are for ever abolished."

I will revert to this subject in my next.

Vale!

M.

LETTER XXVIII.

Benevolent Intentions of the Emperor of Germany, respecting Criminal Judicature—Self-appointed Congress, with Similar Views—The Marquis Beccaria, on Crimes and Punishments—Injurious Effects of Sanguinary Laws.

London.

SINCE my last letter, in which I remarked that the criminal laws of England were the worst in all Europe, I have had an opportunity of obtaining opinions on the subject from several eminent men.

A learned lawyer, from Vienna, is now in London, having been sent hither by the Emperor of Germany, to make enquiry respecting the manner of administering justice in this country. It is the intention of his sovereign to give a precise and invariable form to criminal judicature; and this gentleman will have the honour of drawing up the code, the

outlines of which he has given to me. You will, I am sure, read them with interest.

Romilly has introduced me to a gentleman of much learning and experience, perfectly acquainted with the laws of his country. We frequently meet. They are excellent French scholars, and form what may be termed a congress, self appointed, to effect all the good possible. Austria and the German states are represented by Monsieur Wormster; France by your humble servant; Great Britain by Romilly and his friend. The latter, being less perfect in French, submits his plans and views in writing. I have employed Adam in transcribing some of them. They will, I am certain, prove interesting and useful; and I shall, some time or other, embody them in a work after the manner of "*L'Esprit des Lois.*"

Monsieur Wormster says, the most remarkable part of the code he intends to bring forward, is the total abolition of the punish-

ment of death, excepting in military offences, cognizable by courts martial. The Marquis Beccaria, in his work on crimes and punishments, is the excellent authority by whom, in this respect, he has been guided; and ought not every legislator to acknowledge the truth of such maxims as these? "That the severity of punishment should just be sufficient to excite compassion in the spectators, as it is intended more for them than the criminal." "A punishment, to be just, should have only that degree of severity which is sufficient to deter others and no more." "That perpetual labour has in it all that is necessary to deter the most hardened and determined, as much as the punishment of death, *where every example supposes a new crime*,—perpetual labour, on the other hand, affording a frequent and lasting example." "The punishment of death is not authorized by any right." If so, how shall we recognise the maxim, that a man has no right to kill himself? "The

death of a criminal is a terrible, but momentary spectacle, and therefore a less efficacious method of deterring others, than the continued example of a man deprived of his liberty, and condemned to repair, by his labour, the injury done to society." "A condition so miserable is a much more powerful preventative than the fear of death, which men always behold in distant obscurity."

Twenty years have passed away since Beccaria penned the above lines. Austria will probably be the first to set the example of abolishing the punishment of death.* England, on the contrary, has been altering her code in an inverse ratio; and many crimes which were formerly considered of an inferior rank, have been rendered capital.

Romilly's friend has given me a list of offences punishable with death; but there are many shades and subdivisions upon the statute-books incurring the same penalty, and

* *Vide* Appendix, B.

exceeding in number the frightful amount of one hundred and fifty. In a note, he had subjoined the following judicious remarks:—

"The punishment of death attaching to so many crimes, which are considered by the mass of the people as of an inferior class, and not deserving so severe a doom, must ever operate in a manner injurious to the ends of public justice, by preventing convictions. According to the present system, out of about one hundred who are, upon an average, doomed to suffer the punishment of death, four-fifths, or more, are generally pardoned. If a full consideration be given to the subject, it will be found to be neither politic nor expedient to punish with death, excepting in cases of treason, murder, and some aggravated instances of arson. At any rate, it must be obvious to every reasoning mind, that such indiscriminate rigour, by punishing the petty pilferer with the same

severity as the atrocious murderer, cannot be reconciled to the rights of nature, or to the principles of morality. It is indeed true, in point of practice, that, in most cases of a slight nature, the mercy of the sovereign saves the delinquent; but, is not the exercise of this mercy, rendered so necessary on every occasion, to use Beccaria's words, *a tacit disapprobation of the laws?*

"Cruelty, in punishment for slight offences, often induces offenders to pass on from trivial to the most atrocious crimes. Thus are these miserable fellow-mortals rendered desperate, while the laws, which ought to soften the ferocity of obdurate minds, tend to corrupt and harden them. What education is to an individual, the laws are to society: wherever they are sanguinary, delinquents will be hard-hearted, desperate, and even barbarous. The real good of the state unquestionably requires, that not only adequate punishments should be impartially in-

flicted, but that the injured should obtain a reparation for their wrongs. Instead of such reparation, it is greatly to be lamented, that many are induced to desist from prosecutions, and even to conceal injuries, because nothing but expense and trouble is to be their lot; as all the fruits of the conviction, where the criminal has any property, go to the state. That the state should be the only immediate gainer by the fines and forfeitures of criminals, while the offended party suffers, is certainly not reconcileable to the principles of either justice, equity, or sound policy."

I could dwell upon these topics for months; but my "*Conservator*" * requires my attention.

Adam will continue to send you the observations of Romilly's friend upon this subject; in the mean time, *Vale et me ama.*

M.

* The work on which he was engaged.

LETTER XXIX.

Introduction to the Bishop of Worcester—The Bishop's Thoughts on the System of Education pursued at the Universities—Lord Chesterfield's Letters.

London.

DURING the short stay I made at Oxford, I had the pleasure of being introduced to the Bishop of Worcester, a highly learned man. * He presents one of the instances, so numerous in this country, of a man raising himself, by merit alone, to the first rank.

* Richard Hurd, who, in 1776, when Lord Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, was appointed preceptor to their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. On the death of Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Winchester, in 1781, he was translated to the see of Worcester, vacant by the promotion of Bishop North to that of Winchester. The offer of the Archbishopric of Canterbury was made to him in 1783. He died, Bishop of Worcester, on the 28th of May, 1808, in his 89th year.—ED.

Though the son of a farmer, he might, had he so pleased, have been Archbishop of Canterbury; but modesty induced him to refuse the chair, saying, "Several greater men than himself had been content to die Bishops of Worcester, and that he wished for no other preferment." Possibly the only instance on record of the true application of the celebrated *nolo episcopari.* He has shewn me his work, entitled, "*Of the Education of a Prince;*" and has been kind enough to say, that my letters to the Prince Royal of Prussia, had been of much service to him in the composition of his treatise.

The seats of knowledge I had recently been visiting, suggested a few remarks respecting education in general.

"The present method," he observed," was established before science and polite letters had made any considerable progress in this island, or in Europe. At that period, scholastic learning, and the canon law, were the great roads to distinction and preferment.

Subtilty and acuteness, in disputation and argument, were the most successful weapons in those intricate and perplexed sciences. Hence the esteem of metaphysics and logic, and hence the syllogistical mode of reasoning in the schools, and which at present is of so little use either at the bar, in the pulpit, or in parliament. Though, upon the revival, and during the progress, of letters, every thing seemed to indicate the necessity of a reformation in this respect, custom, and veneration for established forms, still continued the abuse. Even after the adoption of a juster system of metaphysics and philosophy, in the immortal writings of Locke, and of Sir Isaac Newton, the history and development of the human mind were tried by the text of majors and minors. The speculative intricacies of metaphysics, and the revolutions of the planetary system, are not the proper studies of young people of rank and fortune — of those who are destined to act in the constant view of their fellow-citizens, in

a civil, a legislative, or a military capacity. They may serve, indeed, very properly, to amuse the leisure of their riper years; but, to insist so much upon them, at so early a period of life, to the neglect and exclusion of certainly more necessary and useful knowledge, is forming the mind rather to abstruse and solitary speculation, than to studies that nourish imagination,—to talents that qualify us to act with mankind. Instead of these abstruse and perplexing studies, best adapted to interest the retired mind—the cold temperament—might not a lecture on some ancient or modern historian, or moralist—on a Xenophon, an Antoninus, a Cicero, a La Bruyère—be attended with more advantage and pleasure? Might not a Sidney, a Montesquieu, be illustrated with sufficient propriety? Notwithstanding the nature of our government, and though so many of us are entitled to a seat in the legislature, and to take a part in public affairs, both foreign and domestic,

I am afraid that the principles of our own constitution, and the studies of the laws of nations, of peace and of war, with the political system and interests of our neighbours, are very little considered. Indeed, are we so much as instructed in the first elements of this most useful, and—as it might be thought—indispensable branch of knowledge? As to our future conduct in life, and in the world, what authors are so well qualified to teach us to think, to act, to speak, and to write, as the historians of Greece and Rome—whose works we hardly ever open? And what a beautiful guide would Voltaire or Henault be, for a lecture in modern history, in which, perhaps, we are still more interested? These are studies that come home to our proper business and bosoms;—they interest, they warm, they elevate;—they enable us to answer the expectation of our friends—to serve our country adequately—to act that part in society, so plainly pointed out to us

by good sense, and the forms of our government.—A reform therefore must, sooner, or later, take place in the Universities."

The sentiments of the worthy bishop, respecting education, and an alteration in the plan now pursued, do him much honour; he is not wedded to institutions, because they are venerable and ancient; but he is justly indignant at the system desired to be introduced in this country by Lord Chesterfield.

"The *Letters*," he observes, "which have been much read and admired, are indebted for their celebrity, partly to the name of the author, partly to the increasing corruption and frivolous turn of the age. A sententious moralist said, wittily and satirically enough, that they inculcated the manners of a dancing master, and the morals of a prostitute. Perhaps this censure is too severe; but I cannot help disapproving of the plan of education, recommended in them, even upon other accounts; it is not calculated to make

a person succeed in this country, and under our present form of government, even in his views of interest and ambition, the sole end of the author. The very person for whose use it was written, seems sensible of this. That insincerity, that duplicity, that affected blindness, those obsequious, not to call them servile attentions with regard to persons in favour or in station, in whatever estimation in public opinion, will never recommend to credit and advancement in England. To be esteemed, and regarded as of consequence, amongst us, a man must have so much distinctness of character, as to have a mode of thinking of his own; must support his opinions with ardour and confidence—must be ingenuous, candid, almost equally warm in his enmities and in his friendships—where the interest of the public is concerned. The courtly lord's compliances and servilities, his palpably sordid, and selfish resignation of opinions, sentiments, principles,—would be

much more likely to render our artful candidate for notice and office, an object of contempt and detestation, than of esteem and good-will.

"I suppose no one will excuse, in a moral view, the attainment, for whatever purpose—be it ever so advantageous, ever so much what we term honorable—of a character for interested intrigue, sensuality, adultery, and the so-much-insisted-on, even to satiety, masked intentions beneath an open countenance?—For my own part, I think his Lordship's paternal lectures may tend to form a younger son, or brother, for a pitiful envoy at some foreign, despotic court, but never to raise an heir of family or fortune, in this country, either to confidence with the prince, or consideration with the people.

"Let me also add, that the noble tutor's instances are unhappily selected; and, had not those illustrious persons possessed more essential and splendid qualities than the tinsel

of graceful and courtly manners, and even a copiousness and command of language, without argument and excellent good sense, they never would have ruled in senates or triumphed in battle. When nobility acts a part so unworthy of honour and virtue, as to exalt to preferment through the medium of hypocrisy and sensuality, without sentiment or sympathy, it ought to be treated with no more ceremony or respect than literary vanity or avarice, that bawds and panders to the vices, the politics, and manners of the age."

I have given you the opinions of this excellent man upon the subject of the Universities, and the "*Letters of Lord Chesterfield,*" as I am informed that that work is about to be translated into French; and, as it will be in your department to give a criticism, when it may appear, you can make use of the arguments and words of my friend, the *would-not-be* Archbishop of Canterbury.

Adieu, my dear friend, write to me, and write often.

LETTER XXX.

Police of London—Guardians of the Night—London Thieves—Porter-pots—Non-interference of the Police with Public Amusements—Consequent Quarrels and Disturbances—An English Mob, versus *French Dancers at the Haymarket Theatre—Half-price. Conflict at Drury Lane Theatre—Garrick's Revenge—Calagorri, the Bottle-conjurer—Demolition of the Haymarket Theatre—The Duke of Cumberland's Sword—Test of English credulity—The King insulted—Wilkes's "No. 45"—Political Satires—Lord Molesworth, and the King of Denmark—Caricatures.*

London.

THE entire management of the police is in the hands of certain Justices of the Peace, of as little importance as the Commissaries of the Quarters in Paris. Here Justice, through respect for the freedom of the nation, prosecutes offences, without endeavouring to prevent them. She has no spies in her retinue,

nor offices of covert and secret correspondencies, which she regards in the same light as the best Roman Emperors regarded informers.

London has neither troops, patrol, nor any sort of regular watch, like the *Guet* in Paris. It is guarded during the night by a number of old men, selected from the dregs of the people, each carrying a lantern and a staff, patrolling the streets, crying the hour every time the clock strikes, proclaiming good or bad weather in the morning, and awaking those who have journeys to perform. If this efficient *corps* were abolished, no one would miss them more than the young rakes, who give them many a severe drubbing, as they come reeling from the taverns where they have spent the night.

Howsoever the inhabitants of London may think themselves surrounded by thieves, they act not upon that notion with regard to the pewter-pots, in which the publicans distribute strong beer to the houses in their neighbour-

hood. As soon as these pots are emptied, in order that the boys belonging to the ale-houses may collect them with the greater ease, they are often placed at the foot of the door, which is shut, or hung upon the railing. They are to be seen at every turn; and the sight somewhat encouraged me, and destroyed the apprehension I at first entertained respecting the London thieves.

The police does not interfere with the management of public diversions. It thinks itself in duty bound to respect the pleasures and transient gaiety of a nation that has only certain places of entertainment, in which to suspend the melancholy and natural seriousness that form its characteristic. The public diversions of London, not being molested by inspectors, are more free than those of Paris.

All the newspapers of Europe are, from time to time, filled with accounts of the disturbances, tumults, and quarrels, which are

the consequence of this liberty. Some years ago, a quarrel was occasioned by a company of French dancers who were performing at the little theatre in the Haymarket, and against whom the pretenders to patriotism had formed a cabal. The engagement was a severe one, and the combatants, armed with cudgels, renewed the fight several days successively. Victory at length declared for the patriots, and the French left the field of battle to the conquerors. The police and the government had, during the whole of the conflict, observed a strict neutrality.

Drury-lane Theatre had, about the same time, been the scene of action, in a contest the more warm, as the liberty of the nation, or an interest supposed to be closely connected with it, was then in question.

At the London theatres, they generally give a play in five acts, followed by a *petite piece* of one or two more. It had been customary to admit, at the end of the third act,

at half-price, all who desired to enter. Hence it happened, that many persons, not choosing, from motives of economy, to come to the three first acts, which are often the least interesting, the theatres were crowded with spectators who paid only half-price for their places; and this, of course, was against the interests of the managers. Mr. Garrick, the greatest actor that England, and perhaps Europe, ever produced, being then the acting manager of Drury-lane Theatre, imagined he might avail himself of the reputation which he had acquired by his genius, to place his theatre on the same footing with those of Paris. He accordingly proposed this innovation to the public, in the bills of the first play which was to be acted at the house that season.

This proposal raised as great an alarm in London, as the approach of a hostile army could have produced. It extended even to those who did not frequent the theatres. On

the appointed day, the house was extremely crowded. A profound silence prevailed through the audience till the play began; but, scarcely had the actors made their appearance upon the stage, when a general outcry ensued. Garrick's friends exerted themselves in every way to quell the disturbance by remonstrance and entreaties; and, afterwards, the most officious amongst them proceeded to blows, striking, with cudgels, those who were the most clamorous. The engagement soon became general; the actors still continuing upon the stage. Victory declared for the half-price partizans. They tore up the benches of the pit and galleries, demolished the boxes, and armed themselves with the shattered fragments, to drive the actors off the stage, and completely rout those who had espoused their cause. The victory having proved decisive, parts of the broken benches, &c., were seized by the conquerors, and carried away as trophies.

The theatre, having been repaired and opened again, was as much crowded as before. Garrick coming forward upon the stage to apologise for what had occurred, was treated by a part of the audience with much indignity; which he resented, by declining, for a considerable time, to perform, notwithstanding the pressing invitations of the nobility and gentry, seconded by the king himself.

In the year 1749, the little theatre in the Haymarket suffered a shock still more dreadful. An Italian, named Calagorri, undertook to abuse the credulity and idle curiosity of the English. He published an advertisement, that, on the Monday following, the spectators should be presented with a common wine bottle, which any of them might examine; that the bottle should be placed on a table in the middle of the stage; that a man—*absolutely a man*—should get into it, and there sing a song; that, during his stay in the bottle, any person might handle it, and

see plainly that it did not exceed a common quart bottle.

At the time appointed, the house was filled with persons distinguished for birth, rank, or learning. The spectators waited for an hour or two; they then grew impatient and vociferous, when a man came from behind the curtain, and told them, that, if the performer did not appear, their money should be returned. At the same time a wag cried out from the pit, that, if the ladies and gentlemen would give double prices, the conjurer would get into a pint bottle. The alarm became general. Their mortification, in being thus entrapped, was converted into rage. The most furious had recourse to the revenge usual upon such occasions—they instantly began to demolish the house. In the midst of this confusion, and the cries of the people, who were crowded and pressed together by those from the outside, and who had been excited to enter by the noise they heard

within, all the candles were extinguished; and the dread of being crushed to death armed the crowd against themselves. Blows were given on every side; the doors were torn down; and they who were most eager to get out escaped at the breach, bruised, or covered with wounds. They who were blinded to danger by their passion continued the work they had begun, and did not desist till they had destroyed every thing upon the stage, and even pulled down the interior of the house.

Among the most distinguished personages who happened to be present at this extraordinary scene, was the Duke of Cumberland. An extremely valuable sword, presented to him by the Queen of Hungary, had been torn from his side and broken, in the efforts he made to get out of the house. It was found on the following day, amongst the ruins, and the Duke gave a reward of forty guineas to the person by whom it was restored.

As to Calagorri, no sooner had he received the money for this wonderful performance, than he mounted a horse which had been kept ready for him behind the playhouse, and made his escape.

The English assert, that the whole affair was got up by some young nobleman, who had made a bet by which to put the extent of English credulity to the test.

Such are the consequences of the want of a police to regulate theatrical entertainments in London: but this is a branch of public liberty, and it is easy to conceive what a latitude that leaves to words; it extends even to the King himself. At the time when an additional tax was laid upon porter, the royal ears were saluted in the theatre with all that indecent freedom of expression, which the utmost bitterness of resentment could suggest to this haughty people.

Mr. Wilkes's affair, occasioned by his Forty-fifth number of the North Briton, has shown

all Europe to what lengths the liberty of the press is carried in London. The foreign powers of Europe, and their ministers, would in vain flatter themselves, were they to hope for more respectful treatment from the authors in London, than the King of England and his ministers meet with themselves. In how many satires and bitter invectives was Louis XIV. lampooned, long after the defeat of the Jacobite party! Lord Molesworth, upon returning from his embassy to Copenhagen, about the beginning of the present century, published an account of Denmark, replete with the most severe observations upon the court, and state of that kingdom. The King of Denmark, then on terms of the greatest intimacy with the court of England, gave orders to his ambassador, to require of King William ample satisfaction from the author of the book; requesting, even, that he should be delivered up to the Danish

minister, that he might make an example of him. "Take care," said King William, to the ambassador,—"take care how you suffer the order of the King your master to become known: it would have no other effect than to cause another edition of the book, and make it sell better than ever."

Satirical prints are even less taken notice of by the police, than books. A prodigious number of little shops, especially about Westminster Hall, are every day lined with prints; in which the chief persons, both in the ministry and in Parliament, are treated without mercy by emblematical representations. The engraver thinks he has obtained his end, if he can only hit off a few features, to make the persons known whom he intends to hold up to the ridicule of the nation. Amongst others, is a print representing the principal judges, who, having tumbled together upon the floor, with their large flowing

wigs about their ears, are figuring in the most ludicrous attitudes imaginable. The features of most of these magistrates could easily be recognised, the design having been executed by a masterly hand.

M.

LETTER XXXI.

Boxing Matches—Honourable Conduct of Combatants, and of Spectators—Wrestling Match, between Henry VIII. and Francis I.—Inherent Love of the English for Pugilism, illustrated at Eton, Westminster, &c.—Abhorrence of the English for the Crime of Murder—Influence of the Laws upon National Character, or of the National Character upon Laws—London the only Great City in which neither Murders nor Assassinations occur—Good Nature and Humanity of the English, variously exemplified.

London.

WHATEVER is not an immediate infraction of the public peace, is without a tendency to endanger the liberty or lives of the citizens, does not fall under the cognizance of the police, which consequently leaves full liberty to the combats that frequently happen in London amongst the lower classes, and sometimes between persons of better condition,

who, by way of recreation, choose to engage in a boxing match.

The mob are supreme judges of these combats; and they have traditional laws, the first of which is, that the combat is to last till one of the parties acknowledge himself conquered, either by begging for quarter, or lying upon the ground without stirring, and rejecting the assistance of the spectators, who are always ready to raise the vanquished.

These combats are managed by blows with the head and fist. When the boxers enter the ring, they take off their clothes, and often even strip themselves to the skin. It is but politenes in an Englishman so to act, when he has a foreigner to contend with. The combatant thus shows that he has no fear of blows, and that he has nothing upon him that can either ward them off or deaden their effect.

This species of combat is one unquestionably congenial to the character of the

English. It has always been practised in England; and, from thence, adopted by the inhabitants of Brittany, in France, who have constantly retained it, and still practise it with certain modifications. It was a genteel diversion amongst Englishmen of the first rank. In the famous interview between Francis I. and Henry VIII., at Boulogne, the latter one day took the King of France by the collar, and proposed wrestling. The challenge being accepted, Henry gave the French monarch two trips, which Francis recovered from, and then threw the English King upon the ground; giving him, says Fleuranges, a surprising toss.

The taste is so inherent in English blood, that, at Eton and Westminster schools, and other places of a similar description, the children of the greatest noblemen often challenge one another to combats of this kind; and box, according to all the rules and punctilios of honour.

"Why should I not fight?" said one of these boys: "am I not a match for any other of my age? If I decline the combat, or own myself beaten, the rest of the boys will have an advantage over me ever after: my adversary will have a right to say, 'I have beaten that fellow, I am therefore his better.'"

These young noblemen had never had an opportunity of receiving lessons and examples of this species of ferocity amongst the lower classes. The police, as I have said, take no cognizance of these combats of individuals, which keep up the bravery of the people. It allows men to revenge, upon the spot, an insult which they have not given cause for.

Murder is looked upon, in England, as the greatest and most heinous of all crimes. The prepossession which the laws have established in this respect has so universally prevailed in the minds of men, that even highwaymen seldom go so far as to kill those they rob. As soon as the heat of the most violent riot

subsides; this prepossession, again coming in force, preserves the lives of persons, who in any other country would, without mercy, be sacrificed to reasons of state.

Thus Richard Cromwell, Fairfax, and all the chiefs of the anti-royal party, survived the re-establishment of the monarchy, and spent the remainder of their days unmolested.

The city of London, destitute, as it has been already observed, of troops, guards, and a patrol of any sort, peopled by unarmed men, (for few wear swords, except physicians, and officers, when on duty and in their regimentals,) reduced in the night to the superintendence of old men without arms, is guarded only by the divine commandlood, — *Non occides*, Thou shalt not kill, and by laws enacted against murder, severe and rigidly observed without distinction of rank or persons. It may hence be inferred, that the law has had some influence upon the character of the people, or that the national character facilitates the exact observance of the law.

London is the only great city in Europe, where neither murders nor assassinations happen. In the most violent disturbances, the mob will plunder some houses obnoxious to them, throw a few stones, and, though surrounded by troops, remain in a kind of awe, as well as the soldiers, through mutual fear of the effusion of blood.

In a word, the people of London, though haughty and ungovernable, are in themselves good-natured and humane. This holds, even amongst those of the lowest rank. It is apparent from the great care they take to prevent the affrays, almost unavoidable, amidst the eternal passing and repassing of carriages in the most frequented streets, some of which are exceedingly narrow. If, notwithstanding the great care of the coachmen and carmen to avoid them, there arise some confusion and perplexity, their readiness to turn aside, to retire, to open, to lend each other a hand, if there be occasion, prevents the confusion

from degenerating into one of those sanguinary affrays which so often happen in Paris.

At public festivals, and all ceremonies which attract a crowd, let the concourse be ever so great, children, and persons low in stature, are seen to meet with tender treatment; all are eager to make room for them, and even to lift them up in their arms, that they may have an opportunity of seeing. The avenues and doors of the building where the festival is celebrated, are guarded by persons who have no fire-arms, or halberts, but long staves, which, when they use—a case of rare occurrence—make a great noise, and do but little hurt.

I have obtained the preceding remarks from Mr. Gresley, who is now here: he has made this town his study for many years, and, where I find his observations accord with my own, I shall avail myself of his experience. All you require is the truth, and that you may rely upon obtaining.

M.

LETTER XXXII.

Pecuniary Circumstances of London and Paris — Tradesmen and Artisans compared—Advantages of People in the Country over those in Town.

WERE we to form an estimate of the circumstances of the inhabitants of London from the daily gains of its artisans, that people might be thought very rich in comparison with the Parisians, the price of labour being nearly double to what it is in Paris. Yet, every thing is so dear in London, that tradesmen of the lower sort, though they earn much, and are at no expence but what is unavoidable, and to procure bare necessaries, live as such people do every where else, from hand to mouth. The distant counties of England are, in these particulars, the same with respect to London, as the provinces of France are with regard to Paris; and, in both

kingdoms, the same balance holds between the inhabitants of the country and those of the cities. In England, however, the country people seem to have greatly the advantage, as they taste that felicity which was enjoyed by the people of Israel in the days of their prosperity: "*Each man lived, without fear, under his own vine, and his own fig-tree, and ate of the fruit thereof, and drank out of his own cisterns;*" a condition preceded and followed by ages of blood and tears, in which the drooping husbandmen "*went forth and wept, scattering their seed.*"

LETTER XXXIII.

Dearness of Provisions in London—Corn Laws.

London.

To enable you to form a judgment of the dearness of London, take the following prices: bread, 2*d.* a pound; coarse meat, 4*d.*; roasting beef, 8*d.* to 9*d.*; bacon, 10*d.*; butter, 1*s.*; candles, 7*d.*; the price of a cow, 12 or 15 guineas; an acre of land, in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, 5*l.* or 6*l.* *per annum.*

This great dearness of provisions is continually exciting murmurs amongst the people; but famine is not the consequence. The only measures taken, a few years ago, by the legislature, under similar circumstances, were, laying an embargo upon English corn, and suffering the importation of foreign grain during three months. In the debates, upon

that occasion, one of the first peers of England observed, that the dearness of provisions was not so much a proof of a dearth of corn, as of the great superfluity of gold and silver, which war and commerce had brought into the kingdom; that the country partook of that superfluity, which extended even to the farmer; in fine, that it should not be considered as an evil which required their serious attention, but as one of the strongest ties that could be conceived, to bind and attach the people to the government in the then state of affairs. This declaration occasioned an insurrection amongst the populace, which will be noticed in a future letter.

LETTER XXXIV.

English Bread—Yeast first used in Bread by the English—Contest in Paris respecting the Use of Yeast—Inoculation—Tea, and Bread and Butter Breakfasts—Englishmen little Bread-Eaters—Consequent Exportation of Corn.

London.

THE English bread is very good, and very fine, though it has a great deal of crumb. It was the English who first thought of using yeast for leaven, to make bread; a custom which, with difficulty, began to be adopted in Paris about the middle of last century. The first edition of the History of the Police of Paris, presents us with extraordinary papers relative to the contests which it occasioned. The Parliament of Paris, taking cognizance of this affair, consulted the most eminent citizens, with the gentlemen of the faculty,

and were on the point of consulting the Sorbonne. Their contrariety of opinions increasing the difficulty instead of diminishing it, the little loaves continued in possession of the yeast.

In a similar manner we are indebted to the English for the introduction of inoculation, which has met with, and still continues to find, so many antagonists.

The butter and tea, which the Londoners live upon from morning till three or four o'clock in the afternoon, occasions the chief consumption of bread, which is cut in slices, and so thin, that it does as much honour to the address of the person that cuts it, as to the sharpness of the knife. Two or three of these slices furnish out a breakfast.—These people are no less sparing in their other meals: what would be scarcely enough for a Frenchman of an ordinary appetite, would suffice three hungry Englishmen. They seem to eat bread merely through fear of

being thought to eat none at their meals. As this is the natural taste, their physicians consider bread as heavy, and hard of digestion. It is their taste, and the custom established in consequence of it, that enable the English to export great quantities of corn; an exportation which does not so much prove their being overstocked with that commodity, as their consuming but little. A scarcity of corn, therefore, is not greatly felt, even by the common people, who, if circumstances required, could almost go without bread. Hence it may be inferred, by the way, that the cultivation of land is regulated by different principles in France from those which direct it in England, where one half of the ground is, as it ought to be, laid out in pastures and fields for the grazing of cattle.

LETTER XXXV.

Corrected Opinion of the Superiority of English Meat — Veal and Mutton—Soups and Broths—Hypothesis, accounting for the Inferiority of English Animals, and the Superiority of English Vegetables to those of France—Cleanly Habits of the English—Domestic Architecture of London—Leases—Brick-making, and Building—Insurance against Fire—New Quarters of London—Altered Habits of the Nobility.

London.

I SAID, on my arrival at Brighthelmstone, that I had never tasted better meat than was supplied to me at the meal of which I partook. My opinion is somewhat altered since then. Probably it was influenced by the excessive hunger I experienced, after having had my stomach cleared by the *mal de mer*. I agree with Sir G., that English meat, generally speaking, has neither the consistence, the juice, nor the exquisite flavour of that of

France. The veal has all the imperfection of flesh not completely formed; the mutton has nothing to recommend it but its fat, which is so much the more offensive as the butchers do not take off the tallow. The English seem to verify, in this respect, the prophecy of Ezekiel—"*And ye shall eat fat till ye be full.*"

The English are almost strangers to soups. If they sometimes have broths for the sick, or soup for foreigners, the meat with which they make them is never after to be seen—at least at great tables. As it is totally exhausted, and deprived of its juice, it is no longer fit to be served up or eaten; it is nothing but a *caput mortuum.*

The boiled meat, brought to table, passes on the fire only the time requisite for its boiling, and the water is thrown away.

If from vegetation we can draw any just conclusion with regard to animal nutrition, that of England will explain to us why the

flesh of animals, each of which is of a consirable size in its kind, is there less firm, less compact, and less succulent than in France. In a mild climate, subject neither to the violent heats nor excessive colds of France, the English atmosphere, loaded with fogs, and always humid, by hastening vegetation, renders it stronger and more vigorous, on account of the uniform suppleness preserved by the strainers through which the juices circulate. It is easy to perceive this from a view of the trees, whether cut down or growing. They are covered with a sort of moss, or rather down, light, and of a greenish colour, which may be rubbed off with the hand, and is doubtless the effect of an easy transpiration, or of the humidity of the atmosphere. Hence it is that, in England, plane trees, and others of a similar nature, which are cultivated in compliance with fashion, have that prodigious celerity in growing, which the climate of France can never impart.

Extend this analogy to herbs, and to all the smaller vegetables which cattle feed upon; extend it also to animal nutrition, and it will then result, that the flesh of English animals, being of a substance less firm, less compact, and less solid than that of animals in France, is not equally able to bear the operation which prepares the best dish in French cookery. It is perhaps for this reason, that our salt beef is so much inferior to the salt beef of England and Ireland, that those who fit out our shipping give a preference to it. Flesh takes salt, more or less, as well as all the preparations which salting requires, in proportion to the greater or less density of its parts.

The humid and dark air which envelopes London, is a reason why the residents should have acquired habits of cleanliness; and in this respect they vie with the Dutch. The plate, hearth-stones, furniture, apartments doors, stairs, the very street-doors, their locks, and the large brass knockers, are every

day washed, scoured, or rubbed. Even in lodging houses, the middle of the stairs is often covered with carpet to prevent them from being soiled. All the apartments in the house have mats, or carpets; a custom which now begins to prevail in France; but there it is merely a fashion, here a necessity.

The houses in London are all wainscoted with deal; the stairs and the floors are composed of the same materials, and cannot bear the continual rubbing of feet without being cracked and worn. This renders carpets or coverings necessary.

London would be uninhabitable, if, to supply it with constant fuel, it had not a resource in sea-coal; a resource which immense forests would be insufficient to equal.

All the houses in London, excepting only a few in the very heart of the city, belong to contractors, or speculators, who build upon ground, of which a lease is taken for forty, fifty, or ninety-nine years, upon condition of

surrendering the house, in its then condition, at the expiration of the lease, to the proprietor of the ground. The agreement being made, the solidity of the building is measured by the duration of the lease. Those which are raised for a shorter term are only the *shadows* of houses: *de canna straminibusque domos.* It is true, the outside appears to be built of bricks; but the wall consists only of a simple row of bricks, and then being made of the first earth that comes to hand, and only just warmed in the fire, are in strength scarcely equal to those square tiles, or pieces of earth dried in the sun, which, in certain countries, are used for the purpose of building houses.

In the new quarters of London, brick is often made upon the spot where the buildings themselves are erected, and the workmen make use of the earth which they find in digging the foundations. With this earth they mix a phlogiston—the ashes gathered

in London by the dustmen. The inside of these buildings is as much neglected as the outside: thin deal boards supply the place of beams; all the wainscoting is of deal, and the thinnest that can possibly be found. In houses built in this manner it is easy to conceive the progress and ravages made by fires, which very frequently occur. In a word, the English, as well as the people of oriental nations, find something every moment to remind them that the tomb is the only sure and lasting habitation of man.

All the houses, whether solidly or slightly built, are insured against accidental fires. The price for insuring is settled in proportion to the rent, or value, and those who insure are obliged to run the risk. Independently of the spirit of calculation, which seems to govern England, the establishment of insurance offices owes its origin to the deep impression which the great fire of London made upon the minds of the inhabitants.

The new quarters of London, extending from Temple-bar, north and west, have been extending ever since the Revolution; and they increase in extent every day, in proportion as the dominions of England are enlarged. In this manner did the Romans, at every new conquest, remove the Pomœrium of their city to a greater distance.

Hoc paces habuêre bonæ ventique secundi. Pope and Swift, in their history of Scriblerus, represent these new quarters as taking their rise in the parish of St. Giles, which was then only an assemblage of little shops and mean places. The village of Mary-le-bone, which was formed by French refugees, has now become a part of the capital.

Till the last reign, the noblemen of the three kingdoms, being settled upon their estates, merely hired apartments, when public affairs or private business required their attendance in town. They considered

their remoteness from courts the most glorious feature of their independence. Their present eagerness to build in London, according to their wealth or dignity, seems to indicate that they have forsaken the system of their ancestors. The court has not the same immediate interest in this revolution, which Cardinal Richelieu had in that of a similar character, which, while it added lustre to the court of France, ruined the provinces throughout the kingdom. If this extravagant passion should once possess the nobility of Great Britain, London will, by the next century, be double what it now is. At the same time, the country towns, increasing in proportion with London, indicate an overgrown population, which the colonies might naturally be expected to diminish; a circumstance, however, that is not the case.

Pall-Mall, and the other remarkable streets at the west end of the town, in which the

nobility reside, have no court-yard or gates; their entrances are small, not above four feet in breadth; adorned with only two pillars, over which stands a heavy pediment, as much out of its place as the pillars themselves.

LETTER XXXVI.

London Port, alias *Sloe-juice—Shaking of Hands—Erroneous Fancy of the French — Planters in London—French and English Fashions.*

London.

A FOREIGNER cannot easily accustom himself to the beverage called London wine. The red wine is usually of three sorts: Port, Bordeaux, and Burgundy. The white wine is either Spanish or Canary. Mr. G. asserts—and, he says, without fear of contradiction, for he has the fact from a wine merchant—that the country people gather, in the hedges round London, the sloes and blackberries; and that these—mixed up with various ingredients, amongst others turnip juice—blended according to the rules of the vintner's art, form what is termed Port wine; the wine that is drank at taverns and places of public entertainment in and about town.

To take a man by the arm, and shake it till his shoulder is almost dislocated, is one of the grand testimonies of friendship, which the English give each other when they happen to meet. This they do very coolly. There is no expression of friendship in their countenances; yet the whole soul enters the arm that gives the shake. This supplies the place of the salutes and embraces of the French. The English seem to regulate their behaviour upon these occasions by the rules prescribed by Alexander Severus, to those who approached his person:—*Si quis flexisset aut blandius aliquid dixisset, uti adulator vel abjiciebatur*, &c.

The French are apt to imagine, that it is on account of their country they are pushed and shoved in the most frequented streets, and often driven into the kennel. They are mistaken. The English walk very fast, their thoughts being entirely engrossed by business; they are very punctual to their ap-

pointments; and those who happen to be in their way, are sure to be sufferers by it. Constantly darting forward, they jostle them with a force proportioned to their bulk and the velocity of their motion. I have seen foreigners, not used to this exercise, suffer themselves to be tossed and whirled about a long time, in the midst of a crowd of passengers, who had nothing else in view but to get forward. Plautus, describing the bustle of the port of Athens, has given a true account of this city:—

"Drive those forward who are coming towards you; push them on; force them into the middle of the street; when you are running on, and when you are in the greatest hurry imaginable, scarcely any body will vouchsafe to make way for you: so that you have three things at once upon your hands, when you have undertaken but one; you must run, fight, and scold by the way."

We should be in an error, were we to

imagine that the English fashions, diametrically opposite to those of the French, are contrived in the manner they are, to avoid all resemblance to those of our nation. On the contrary, if the former are in any respect influenced by the latter, it is by the desire of imitating them. A mode begins to be out of date in Paris, just when it has been introduced in London, by some English nobleman. The court, and the first-rate nobility, immediately take it up; it is next introduced, about St. James's, by those who ape the manners of the court; and, by the time it has reached the city, a contrary mode already prevails in Paris, where the English, bringing with them the obsolete fashion, appear like the people of another world.

LETTER XXXVII.

The Duke de Nivernois at the Royal Exchange—Exchange Regulations—Mode of Life of London Merchants—Tradesmen and Mechanics—Cause of the Perfection of English Manufactures—Simplicity of the English Mode of Book-keeping—Public Offices—Debt Books—Commerce, the Cause of the Opulence and Grandeur of England—English Merchant and French Farmer-General—Election of Lord Mayor—Freedom of the City—Duke of Brunswick and Lord Chatham—Leaders of the Opposition—Merchants, formerly, the Chief Inhabitants of London—Flourishing State of English Manufactures, the Result of French and Flemish Persecution.

London.

THE Gazette of France gave a strange account, some years ago, of an insult offered to the Duke de Nivernois, during his embassy in London. The truth is, curiosity led that nobleman to the Royal Exchange. After he had walked round it, just as he approached

the great gate leading to the street, it was shut upon him. At this he betrayed some surprise; and the report being spread that the Duke was there, he was surrounded, pressed, and squeezed by the crowd, till he arrived at the opposite gate, which he found half shut. The Royal Exchange is opened before one o'clock; at two, one of the folding doors which opens to the street is shut; at half-after two, the other folding door is also shut, together with one belonging to the opposite; the folding door that remains open, is half shut at three quarters after two; and, at three, all the gates are locked, so that those who stay behind till the hour is past are sure to be locked in till between four and five. Now, it happened that the Duke de Nivernois presented himself at the door that leads to the great street, just as it was shutting; and the pushing of the crowd arose from the general eagerness of the multitude to obtain a sight of a nobleman, who, by his magnificence and

affability, had conciliated the affection of the English of all ranks.

The punctuality with which they shut the gates of the Royal Exchange, is connected with the general interests of commerce: it leaves only a limited time to those speculations and conversations which, without such precaution, would degenerate into idle chat, and never have an end. The discussions just commenced are terminated in the coffee-houses about the 'Change. The banker, the English trader, and the foreign merchants, divided according to their several nations, have each a coffee-house near the Royal Exchange; as the advocates and attorneys belonging to the Parliament of Paris have their bench at the Palais.

The manner in which the English bankers and merchants live, notwithstanding the care attending a commerce of such immense extent, is the same as that of the lawyers, physicians, and the citizens in general. They rise rather

late, and pass an hour at home, drinking tea with their families: about ten, they go to the coffee-house, where they spend another hour; then they return home, or meet persons on business; at two, they go to 'Change; on their return, they lounge again a little at the coffee-house; and then dine, about four. Forty years ago, two was the hour of dining, and, before that, one. The hour of going on 'Change then interfered with dinner-time; so that the merchants thought it advisable not to dine till their return. Since this arrangement, dinner concludes the day, and they give the evening to their friends.

Acquaintances meet at clubs, formed by connexions of good fellowship. In summer, the latter portion of the day is passed either in some of the public walks, or, if they happen to have a villa near town, in a country excursion. About ten at night, they go home to bed, after taking a slight repast. In all seasons, the merchants generally retire to the

country on Saturday; and do not return till Monday, at 'Change time.

Inferior dealers, and even mechanics, imitate this manner of living as far as in them lies. In the month of May, the shops and warehouses are not opened till about eight o'clock. Mechanics, of the lowest sort, carry English independence still farther: nothing but want of money can compel them to work. When obliged to labour, they, as it were, fight with their task; they go to it like madmen—like people enraged at being compelled to work. They prefer toiling in this manner, with all their might, and resting themselves from time to time, to passing the whole day gently and easily in their employ. Business is the better carried on for this ardour of the artificer: this is evident from the perfection of all English manufactures.

Bankers and merchants, who have most business upon their hands, do not confine themselves constantly to their counting-

houses, excepting on the two foreign-post days. The idle time which this procures may at first excite surprise, but it may be explained by the fact, that they by no means keep the same number of books as the French and Italian merchants. As they enter upon business with that spirit of order and regularity which characterizes their nation, simple minutes sufficiently enable them to transact the most important concerns.

The offices of the secretaries of state, and of the several departments dependent on, or connected with them, are not so numerous in England, nor filled with so large a number of clerks, as in many countries. If business had been transacted in the Roman empire, composed of large provinces, now become kingdoms, with the same tedious formalities as it is at present conducted in the different states of Europe, it seems problematical whether Rome and its suburbs would have been able to contain the requisite number of offices.

The debt-book, which an English merchant always carries in his pocket, often presents a greater number of objects than one of our largest volumes. Besides, commercial affairs depend less upon the pen than upon the head: the greatest gains are next to the greatest risks: a great risk is run in every thing; and the merchant who is concerned to the amount of a hundred thousand pounds, may, by a variety of chances, which he boldly encounters, see his fortune, in the course of a single day, either doubled or annihilated.

These debt-books are the chief basis of the opulence and grandeur of the nation; they cover the seas of the four parts of the globe with ships—they occasion wars, and enable the nation to bear them—they triumph in prosperous events; and, in times of public calamity, they repair misfortunes, and hold the conquerors in awe. The English merchant, in this point, is just what a French farmer-general of the revenues caused himself to be represented in a print; having one hand

on the terrestrial globe, and with the other issuing orders to vessels sailing for different ports. The English merchant, however, has books in a state to be laid before the magistrate, who sits at Guildhall, to take cognizance of disputes between traders. These books are kept in a summary manner, without any useless repetition or superfluous detail. Generally speaking, every banker, every merchant, has a partner, whose only business is to keep the books, and take care of the accounts; the principal person in the firm superintending the main concern. These departments are regulated not so much by extent of capital, as by ability and intelligence.

The court has but a very remote influence over the election of the chief city magistrate, (the Lord Mayor,) which, indeed, is often made in a manner diametrically opposite to its views. The kings of England, themselves, sometimes contrive to get enrolled in one of the companies I have described. King

William, when Prince of Orange, was made a member of that of the Drapers.

When the city of London, in imitation of the example set by certain Greek republics, intends to honour with its freedom any foreigner of distinction, the party must be enrolled. The Duke of Brunswick, who served England so well in Germany, was honoured with this distinction, after a grand entertainment from the city of London. On receiving his freedom in a gold box, he chose to be made a member of the Grocers' Company, to which the Lord Mayor at that time belonged. Lord Chatham also was enrolled in the Grocers' Company.

The leaders of the opposition in parliament, though often men of the noblest families, are ambitious of being free of the city; that freedom being regarded as a pledge of mutual attachment between them and the people.

London was formerly inhabited by mer-

chants and tradespeople only. The nobility, before they began to build those fine houses the number of which is daily increasing, came up to town as to a sort of fair, well provided with inns, where they were to stay but a short time.

The manufactures of the country, now in so flourishing a condition, owe their origin to the persecuting spirit which drove them out of France, and, before that, out of Flanders. "The Duke of Alva's successes having removed all opposition to his will, he endeavoured to render the Inquisition more rigorous than ever, and gave it himself the appellation of the Bloody Council; insomuch that he banished from Flanders the best artificers and manufacturers, who, retiring to England, settled themselves in the cities of Norwich, Gloucester, &c., upon which the towns of Flanders were drained of inhabitants." The revocation of the Edict of Nantes proved equally advantageous to England.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Duke of Bedford a Dealer in Life Annuities—Origin of the "Precarious Contract" *in France—Its Mischievous Effects—Annuities for Life, and for Limited Terms—Entailed Estates—Mortgages—Resources of the Nobility—De Moivre's Treatise on Loans, &c.*

London.

FROM the lowest citizen, to the first nobleman in England, all ranks and conditions furnish matter for speculation. The Duke of Bedford publicly deals in annuities for life, which have had such ill success in France—at least with regard to lenders—in the hands of certain noblemen and governors of hospitals. In the tenth century, the Gallic church invented this commerce with regard to its funds, by the title of the *Precarious Contract.** By resigning their

* *Vide* Letter LI.

lands, &c. to the church, the owners retained the usufruct for life, and received double the value on the money of the church. They who gave up the usufruct of the estate, received still greater advantages—the threefold value of it. This commerce was afterwards introduced in Italy, and greatly contributed to make all estates in land fall into the hands of ecclesiastics. The troubles of these times rendered all property so precarious, that the least covetous possessors of estates were thereby determined to enter into these fatal contracts. The only risk in these loans, in France, turns upon the death of the lender; but, in England, they risk on any thing: money is with equal readiness advanced upon the life of the lender, the borrower, or any other person. A man who has a place, or employment, is desirous of insuring bread to his wife and children; and with this view he lends money upon their lives and his own. During his own life, he will receive but one

per cent.; but at his death, his wife and children will touch twelve, fifteen, or twenty *per cent.* This may happen the very day after the loan, or never—if the lender should live to bury his wife and children. The danger is anticipated, by lending upon the head of the father of the lender, or the father of the borrower. Loans of this description are sometimes limited to five or seven years, on condition of paying an interest proportioned to the shortness of the time, and the danger of losing both principal and interest, should the person, upon whose head the money has been lent, not live the five or seven years.

It is chiefly with noblemen who launch into extravagance, that such contracts are entered into; a resource which the nobility of other countries, who are for hastening still faster to their destruction, are deprived of. Local circumstances gave rise to these contracts in England: the estates of almost

all the great families are entailed; and, in virtue of this regulation, the children of the deceased, or the next heir, immediately take possession of their estates, without liability for debts of the deceased. If a nobleman be obliged to mortgage his estate, for the payment of his creditors, they receive no benefit from it but during his lifetime.

The treatise of Monsieur de Moivre, a French refugee, was first published in 1729. It has become a sort of code of loans and life annuities, and has rendered them exceedingly common.

LETTER XXXIX.

Bank of England—Mr. Law's Scheme in France—Commercial Non-Intercourse betweeen England and France, counteracted by Smuggling—Predilection of the English for French Manufactures—Their Alleged Superiority—Triumph of an English Lady—Prices of Labour in France and England—English Merchants the Founders of New Families.

London.

The bank of England is a sort of thermometer in all commercial affairs: its rising or sinking accelerates or retards them. This is the strong box of the whole nation—a strong box to which the king has no key. The funds belong to numbers of individuals. The famous Mr. Law took from hence the model he began to work upon in France; but an attempt to form such an establishment in that kingdom, is like planting a vineyard in England.

Effectual measures seem to have been taken

by the English, to prevent all connexion and correspondence in business, between them and the French. Merchandise or manufactures, the produce of France, is entirely prohibited, or loaded with duties, the enormousness of which is equal to an express prohibition. But commerce is like water, which is making continual efforts to attain its own level; and, if prevented from gaining it openly, it will find it covertly. France ever did, and ever will, find a sure remedy against English prohibitions, by its contraband trade; a remedy the more effectual, as the English have the same prejudices in favour of French manufactures, which the French have with regard to those of England; with this difference, that, while England draws articles of importance from France, such as wines, silks, &c., they supply the French in return with nothing but trifles of little or no value.

Even English merchants will tell you,

that good hats or good stuffs, whether silk or woollen, are made only in France; that English hats suck in the water like sponge; that the woollen stuffs are as stiff as pasteboard; and that their lace is like *papier machée.* The ladies entertain a still more disadvantageous idea of them. An English lady, who has the good fortune to procure a French silk gown, is sure to eclipse all her rivals, particularly if that gown have been made in Paris. If to these caprices, we add the cheapness of work in France, in comparison with its dearness in England, with the proportionable profit resulting hence to the English merchant, we shall be convinced, that, if public interest produce a necessity for the most rigorous prohibitions of French commodities, private lucre can find a thousand ways by which to evade and bid defiance to these prohibitions. Contraband trade furnishes the means: it is carried on by stratagem and cunning; and, some-

times, with an intrepidity proportioned to the greatness of the profit by which it is attended.

The flourishing state of trade in London appears from the wealth of the merchants, from the rapidity and immensity of the fortunes made by it; which may be compared to those acquired by the management of the finances in other countries. These fortunes —either immediately, by titles of nobility, with which the kings of England, since Charles II., are disposed to honour them, or indirectly, by marriages—produce the same effect in England, which wealth amassed in the finances does elsewhere. They re-establish ancient families, and found a great number of new ones. Scarcely are these new families formed, but they think themselves on a level with those of the most ancient nobility.

Further, in consequence of the ceremony required by a most extensive commerce, and

the attention and care inseparable from mercantile concerns, the great merchants are trained up in principles as favourable to the raising of a new family, and to the public manners of a commercial state, as the spirit of financiers is dangerous both to the public and to individuals.

LETTER XL.

Gentlemen Agriculturists—Salutary Effects of the Civil War—Noble Families engaged in Commerce—Ancient Law of England respecting Knighthood—Grants of Nobility to Land-owners—Abolition of Single Combat by the Puritans—Duelling ridiculed on the Stage—Pride of dying Rich—Sir Robert Pinsent's Legacy to Mr. Pitt.

London.

GENTLEMEN of fortune, even some of the greatest distinction amongst them, are entirely busied in the cultivation of their lands, and the several means of turning them to the best advantage. True it is, the laws of ancient heraldry, common both to France and England, formerly permitted, and still permit, poor gentlemen to till their own lands; but they would have looked with a jealous eye upon a gentleman, in easy circumstances, had he applied himself entirely to agriculture.

Fortunately for England, these laws, and the consequent prejudices against commerce and industry, are now succeeded by notions of an opposite nature. This revolution in men's minds is one of the happy effects of the civil wars of the last century.

Nearly all the nobility being attached to the catholic, episcopal, or regal parties, were exposed to the fanatic rage of the enemies and usurpers of supreme authority. These noblemen, excluded from all civil and military employments, ruined by a thousand vexations under the public sanction, had no other mode of providing for their children, except by national and foreign commerce. The fortunes made in this way restored many noble families to their primitive opulence: this continued to diminish the prepossession against trade, until, at last, it was totally eradicated.

Thomas and Richard Walpole, nephews to the celebrated Sir Robert, minister under

George the Second, were—one a banker, and the other a merchant in London. These gentlemen, and such as tread in their steps, have partners, clerks, &c., to superintend the details of their business. In this respect, they think and act like the Italians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries;—like the families of Medici, the Strozzis, the Spinolas, and the heads of the grandest families of Venice, Genoa, Florence, Milan, &c.

This conduct of the nobility was favoured by an ancient law of Edward the Second, or Third, whereby every citizen, possessed of land to the value of 20*l.* per year, was obliged to get himself admitted knight, (*miles*,) in the sense given to this word by the authors of the middle ages. James the First, and, after him, Charles, caused this obsolete law to be revived. Their aim was to get money without the concurrence of parliament. By this law, which was a pecu-

niary one originally, a person raised above the rank of burgess, and admitted amongst the gentry, owed the king and the state his personal service. It was in pursuance of this plan, that Solon distributed the several classes of his commonwealth: rank was settled according to the different degrees of fortune, as in the Roman republic.

> Si quadringentis sex septem millia desunt,
> Plebs eris.—HORAT.

The barbarians who subverted the Roman empire, had imbibed contrary principles; principles which are still laws to Europe, notwithstanding the precepts and examples of the greatest sages amongst the ancients. If, following these examples and precepts, the rank of nobility were granted to every proprietor of a certain quantity of land, sovereigns would enrich their dominions by favouring cultivation; would become opulent themselves—would terminate the disputes about the title of gentility, assumed daily by

rich people; and, in a word, would break the shackles with which a false prepossession has loaded the *noblesse.*

No sooner were these shackles broken, but the civil war of England forged new ones, for which it may justly lay claim to applause. They have abolished the frenzy for duelling, and single combats. The Puritans, the Independents, the Levellers, and other enthusiasts, who composed the army of Cromwell, had no learning or knowledge but what they derived from the Bible; finding no example of single combat in that book, they held the custom in the utmost abhorrence, and as an invention of Anti-Christ. Hence the prohibition of duelling, under the severest penalties, was one of the first objects of Cromwell's attention and solicitude. The Roman Catholics, attached to the royal party, retained the practice; but the prejudice against it being adopted by the majority, duels were scarcely ever heard of. This is one of the

greatest advantages which England derived from fanaticism.

The stage will complete what religion began: no opportunity is there neglected to turn duels into ridicule, and to make those who fight them appear contemptible. The point will be the more certainly gained, as this frenzy is by no means conformable to the English character; it prevails only among the nobility, and some gentlemen who, in their travels, have adopted foreign manners.

England was a long time, like the rest of Europe, governed by the laws which, in certain cases, enjoined single combat: they are the subject of the second book of the great work of Glanville, *De Leg. et cons. Angliæ sub Hen. II.*

The resolution of sovereigns had confined this practice within the bounds of the law, which no individual durst transgress, and was to cease by its abrogation. This abrogation

has insensibly brought the English to the same way of thinking, in this respect, with the Greeks, and those barbarians that were known to that nation. Perhaps their example will at last induce the rest of Europe to follow it.

Almost every Englishman—whether artisan, merchant, or farmer—who has raised a fortune by his industry, or lives upon his paternal estate, takes a pride in dying rich, in having a pompous funeral, and in making a will, which, by the extraordinary manner of bequeathing his property, may spread far and wide, in the public papers, the fame of his opulence. This is their way of enjoying it. The whole conversation in the country was, a few years ago, respecting a legacy, to a very considerable amount, left to Mr. Pitt, by a country gentleman, Sir Robert Pynsent, who, though in no way related to the minister, distinguished him by this mark of regard for his political abilities.

LETTER XLI.

London Clubs—Addiction of the English to Gaming—Origin of Sandwiches—Robin Hood Society—Female Politicians—Anecdote of Lord Tyrconnel—Toasting—Origin of Pledging at Table ascribed to the Highlanders—The Custom adopted in France.

London.

THE establishment of clubs, of which there are numbers in London, is owing to the English character, which must perpetuate the custom. They are held among friends, who, having contracted an intimacy in their early days, and experienced each other's fidelity, are united by a conformity of tastes, schemes of life, and modes of thinking. These meetings fully gratify that desire which every man has to associate with his equals.* It sometimes happens that wealthy

* The club system, as it may be termed, has been matured, greatly extended, and even carried to excess, since the days of Mirabeau.

Besides the political clubs, of long standing—White's,

persons leave all they are worth to some member of their club. Associations of this

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for the Tory party, and Brookes's, for the Whigs—we have the Wyndham, and the Carlton, of recent origin.

The Wyndham, deriving its name from the accidental circumstance of its having first occupied a house formerly inhabited by the celebrated Mr. Wyndham, was formed in 1828, under the auspices of Lord Nugent, Sir Francis Burdett, the Marquess of Donegal, the Earl of Fife; Thomas Baring, James Brougham, C. Powlett Thomson, and J. Smith, Esqrs. &c. The object in establishing this club was, to secure a convenient and agreeable place of meeting for a society of gentlemen, all connected with each other by a common bond of literary and personal acquaintance.

The Carlton Club, composed of gentlemen of what is now termed the conservative party, was established during the progress of the Reform Bill. It consists of seven or eight hundred members, noblemen and gentlemen; amongst whom may be noticed several of the wealthiest of the Tories.

Boodle's Club, for the accommodation of country gentlemen, has been long established.

There is also, the Traveller's, an amusing description of which is given in the "*Letters of Prince Puckler Muskau*"; Crockford's; the Asiatic; the Colonial; the University; the Naval; the Military; the Guards';

nature often unite different religions; but they can never reconcile those who espouse opposite parties in politics; so true is the observation of Nicole—"that there are few

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the Oxford and Cambridge; the United Service; the Junior United Service; the Alfred; the Albion; the Cocoa; the Union; the English and Foreign Union; the Literary Union, formed about two years since; the Athenæum, the original object of which was the promotion of literary and scientific pursuits; and the Garrick, the ostensible object of which is to promote a taste for the English drama.

The Garrick Club was formed under the patronage of the Duke of Sussex; and amongst its most distinguished members are—the Duke of Devonshire, the Marquess of Anglesea, Earl Mulgrave, the Lords Glengall and Leveson Gower, &c.

At the west end of the metropolis are also many dinner clubs, of the old school. One of the most select of these, over which the Duke of Sussex presides, is the Royal Society Club.

Grillions', so denominated from the hotel in Albemarle-street, was formed about twenty years ago, by a set of gentlemen who had been educated together at Oxford; the late Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta; Sir Thomas Drake Acland; Lord Ebrington; Sir Robert Wilmot

friendships that do not partake of the nature of a cabal."

There are regular clubs, held in coffee-houses and taverns, on fixed days and hours; wine, beer, tea, pipes and tobacco, help to

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Horton, now Governor of Ceylon, &c. This society, in which the bickerings of party spirit are sacrificed to the kindly impulse of better feelings, has a dinner, at which from fifteen to twenty of its members meet every Wednesday during the sittings of Parliament. Its present aggregate number is about fifty; including Lords Chandos and Althorp, Francis Leveson Gower and John Russell, Granville, Somerset, and Palmerston, Lord Nugent and Sir Richard Vyvyan, Mr. William Bankes, &c.

"The Club," so denominated *par excellence*, founded by Dr. Johnson, still holds its monthly sittings, in the parliamentary season, at the Thatched House Tavern, St. James's. The names of Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, Goldsmith, the Bishop of Dromore, Reynolds, Warton, Garrick, Lord Stowell, Fox, Sheridan, &c., have been enrolled amongst its worthies; a complete list of whom, down to the year 1830, or 1831, is preserved in Mr. Croker's edition of Boswell's Life of Johnson. In the dining room of the Club are portraits of many of its early and distinguished members—Johnson, Garrick, Burke, Warton, Dr. Percy, Oliver Goldsmith, Sir

amuse them at the meetings. There are others, kept at the houses of persons of fortune. These meet, in turn, at the apartments of the several members, if they are

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Joshua Reynolds, &c., from the pencil of Sir Joshua himself.

"The Literary Society," over which Sir Robert Inglis presides, also meets at the Thatched House, in parties of from fifteen to five-and-twenty, every Friday evening, during the sittings of Parliament. This institution, consisting of thirty or forty members, is graced by the most eminent names of modern literature and art; differences in political sentiment not operating in the election of candidates. The late Sir James Mackintosh, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and Crabbe, the poet, were members. In the present list may be found Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth; Scott, Rogers, Moore, and Shiel; the Earl of Munster, the Bishop of Exeter, and Sir George Murray; Sir Martin Archer Shee, Sir Robert Smirke, Phillips, Westmacott, and Chantrey; the Lords Mahon and Rochester; Mr. Serjeant Coleridge, and the Lord Advocate Jeffrey; Messrs. Lockhart, Barrow, Macauley, Luttrell, Hallam, &c. On the introduction of the President, foreigners of distinction are eligible for admission as visitors. This society is of about twelve or fifteen years' standing.—Ed.

bachelors; and even if they are married, provided their wives have no objection. He at whose house the club is kept, supplies the members with refreshment.

Most of the public societies have a president, who is openly chosen, by plurality of votes, or by ballot, for a limited time, at the expiration of which they proceed to a new election. The president's seat is at the head of the table; and his chair, somewhat more elevated than those of the other members, is adorned with some carved design, emblematic, generally, of those objects which engage the attention of the club.

Amongst men of learning, artisans, and clergymen, public affairs generally furnish the subject of conversation; every Englishman giving as much attention to these matters as though he were the prime minister. This is the case even with the lowest class, and country people. Pleasurable and gay conversation is unknown to these societies. The

English find no relief from reflection, except in reflection itself: they have no other means of amusing themselves; and gaming gives them pleasure, only by affording them an opportunity to reflect.

The English, who are profound thinkers, violent in their desires, and carrying all their passions to excess, are altogether extravagant in the article of gaming. Several rich noblemen are said to have ruined themselves by it; others devote their whole time to it, at the expense of their business, their repose, and their health. A minister of state passed four-and-twenty hours at a public gaming-table, so absorbed in play, that during the whole time he had no sustenance but a bit of beef between two slices of toasted bread, which he ate without ever quitting the game. This refreshment became highly in vogue, and received the name of the minister (Lord Sandwich) by whom it was invented.

Even the lowest classes have their clubs.

There is one which meets twice a week at the Robin Hood, in Butcher Row.* The president, who happened to be a baker, was seated in a sort of desk or pulpit, and portioned out time by an hour-glass, to masons, carpenters, smiths, and others. They sit three hours: each member has three-quarters of an hour allowed to him to speak; at the expiration of which the

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Butcher Row, a place no longer in existence, occupied nearly the site of Pickett Street, westward of Temple Bar. Burke, Garrow, and other distinguished men, are known to have exercised their early oratorical powers in this society; of which many amusing particulars may be found in the history of the times.

About fifteen years after the time when Mirabeau wrote these letters, there were several societies, of a similar, but superior character, in different parts of the metropolis, in which persons of both sexes paid sixpence each for admission, but without any refreshments being introduced. Religion and politics—especially the latter—were the favourite subjects of discussion. These societies were suppressed by government, on the ground that they disseminated sedition and infidelity.—EDITOR.

president stops him, by the knock of a hammer.

This club, to use an Italian phrase, is of a semi-public form. All sorts of people are admitted; you are favoured with a seat for sixpence, and have a pint of beer into the bargain. Public affairs, and even religious topics, equally claim the attention and speculations of this meeting, at which the subjects that occasion most debate in Parliament are frequently discussed.

Women could never gain admittance to these clubs. This exclusion, they compensate by private coteries of their own, in which, it is asserted, they talk politics. The following story is related of Lord Tyrconnel, who had been educated in France, and only came to England when in the thirtieth year of his age.

Being perfectly acquainted with the language, he visited the English, and listened to their conversations, both at their own

houses and at the clubs where they met. Tired of hearing nothing but politics, during two months, he invited certain fair Cyprians to sup with him, at a well known tavern; but scarcely had they sat down to table, when the conversation turned upon a subject then under parliamentary debate, and highly interesting to the nation. The ladies adopted different sentiments. In vain did the Amphytrion endeavour to change the discourse, and to lead to topics more entertaining; they persisted in talking politics. He quitted them in a passion, and made all haste back again to France.

Gentlemen who meet to dine together form a sort of club. The conversation does not begin to grow interesting till the dessert: then the cloth is taken away, and several sorts of wines are brought upon the table. The ladies having retired, they drink round, and settle the affairs of the nation. This drinking round is called toasting, a custom peculiar to the English, and is of ancient

date in their country. In the life of Saint Wulstan, William of Malmsbury informs us, that the good bishop "was very abstemious, both with regard to eating and drinking; though it was customary for those admitted to his table to drink, according to the English practice, for many hours after dinner; with whom he being seated, said the psalms to himself, yet pretended to drink in his turn. Others quaffed foaming bowls; he himself holding a little cup in his hand, excited them to cheerfulness, rather in compliance with his country custom, than because he in his judgment thought it right."

The conversation is interrupted by drinking to the health of the present, and of the absent, amongst whom, the favourite statesman, and the beauties most in vogue, are not forgotten. The English say that the custom originated with the Scotch Highlanders, who have preserved it in its original purity. Those people, who used to live in unceasing discord and faction, on account of the quarrels of their

chiefs, and the enmities which those quarrels perpetuate in families, were sometimes united by feasts and merry meetings. Drinking to a person's health, at their feasts, meant, that you requested him to guard you while you were drinking. In consequence of this tacit intreaty, the person whom you drank to replied—"I will pledge you—or I will answer for it;" he then drew his dagger, placed it on the table, and continued upon the watch till the contents of the glass were swallowed. This barbarous custom was followed in France, if we may judge from the ancient expression, *Je vous pleige* (I pledge you), made use of by our ancestors in returning this health. This was the very same form of words made use of by the Scotch Highlanders. Perhaps it was even attended with the ceremony of placing the dagger on the table during the wars between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs, and at other unfortunate periods in our history.

LETTER XLII.

Horse-racing and Cock-fighting—Epsom Race-course—Breed of Racers—Affection of the English for Horses—Operation of shoeing—Bad Treatment of Asses—Side-saddles—Anne of Luxembourg.

London.

HORSE-RACING and cock-fighting are carried on here to a pitch of absolute madness, and many gentlemen of fortune ruin themselves by these pleasures.

The course, at Epsom, is in the middle of the downs, intersected by three hills in parallel lines: in the vales between these hills, the champions entered the list: the spectators came in coaches, which, without the least bustle or dispute about precedency, were arranged in three or four lines, on the first of those hills; and, on the top of all was a scaffolding for the judges who were to award

the prize. This scaffolding was the goal which bounded the race; and the starting-post was at the head of the outer vale of the second hill. Four horses starting from thence ran in this valley, about the length of a mile; turned round by the next hill, to the height of the starting-post, and at length reached the hill on which stands the scaffolding, where he that came in first was declared the victor.

The prize is not adjudged till after three heats; and to him only who has won two out of the three.

There are neither lists nor barriers at these races. The horses run in the midst of the crowd, who leave only a space sufficient for them to pass through, at the same time encouraging them by gestures and loud shouts. The victor, when he has arrived at the goal, finds it a difficult effort to disengage himself from the crowd, who congratulate and caress him with an affection of heart

which it is no easy matter to form an idea of unless you have witnessed it.

The deference to the victors is not confined to these transient honours. All the houses of country gentlemen, all the inns, are lined with pictures of horses, painted or engraved in various attitudes of strength or agility, with an account of the victories they have won, their names, those of the jockeys by whom they were trained; in fine, those of the noblemen to whom they belonged, and from whom they experienced all the care and tender treatment which favourite children can expect from a parent.

So great was the crowd which covered the place where the horses ran, that I could not see them except upon the ridge of the second hill. They kept upon the full stretch, without rising or darting forward, and seemed to resemble wooden horses, fixed in full stretch upon the rim of a great horizontal circle, moving round upon its axis with the utmost imaginable rapidity.

These race-horses do not show their worth by their outward appearance: they are gaunt and meagre, and an awkward manner of stretching out their necks deprives them of all their beauty, the principal of which, in a horse, is to hold its head in a graceful attitude. The preservation and multiplication of this breed is owing to laws enacted by Henry the Eighth; and to prizes established in different parts of England for the victors at races. In short, these horses are, with respect to others, what gladiators were among the ancient Greeks and Romans.

These races are not like those of Barbary horses, at Rome, and other cities of Italy. Each horse is ridden by a jockey, who is, generally speaking, only a common groom, unentitled to the least share in the honour of the victory, which is divided between the horse and the owner. The horses are sometimes mounted, at races, by noblemen who are willing to run the risk. They are less

exposed to the danger of falling, bruising themselves, or dislocating a limb—a circumstance which occurred a few years ago to a young nobleman, at his first race, at Newmarket—than to be deprived of respiration by the velocity of the motion. In order to cut the air, the groom, who almost lies upon the neck of the horse, holds the handle of the whip fixed before him, or shakes it above his mouth. Previously to the commencement of the race, the jockey, the saddle, and the whole trappings of the horse, are weighed in presence of the judges; and care is taken, that all the horses admitted to run be of an equal weight. Victory is often due to the knowledge which the jockey has of his horse, and to the direction he gives him forward, or managing him properly.

The English in general have a degree of friendship and affection for horses, which few men even show to their own species. They seldom or never strike them, and the long

whip that coachmen and carmen carry in their hands, is rather to direct them by signs than by blows. They seldom even speak to them except in a gentle and affectionate tone of voice. The horses of gentlemen of fortune, both in town and country, mostly die in the stable where they were foaled. They are treated like old friends, who, when advanced in years, are taken care of in consideration of past services.

But it is in the operation of shoeing them, especially in the country, that the care taken of these animals eminently displays itself. A farmer goes with his horse to a farrier, ties it to a ring, caresses it, takes off his coat, puts it upon the head of the animal, so as to cover its eyes; and, holding it by the head, continues to talk to it, and caress it as long as the operation lasts. The farrier shows as much tenderness as the master; he soothes the horse, speaks to him, lifts his foot gently from the ground, and, after having given the

leg and thigh a motion of rotation as though he were about to set a dislocated limb, he holds the foot with one hand, without the least emotion, and performs the operation with the other.

This tender treatment renders horses both tractable and friendly towards man. The ardour and fire with which they are animated do not, in the least, diminish their gentleness of temper.

Though the English are so fond of horses, they have not the least tenderness for asses. It is customary with them to deprive those creatures of the chief ornament they have received from nature: they cut off their ears close to their heads, which gives them the oddest and most ludicrous appearance imaginable. A worthy clergyman preached to no purpose in his village against this practice. He mustered up all the arguments that had been made use of against the practice of masquerades, which were then tolerated in England, and he

demonstrated that it was not lawful for man to alter and disfigure the work of God.

The English are as fond of riding as the Italians are of music. It rouses them; it prevents, suspends, and removes the effects of melancholy upon the constitution; it is an habitual want, and a necessary remedy. They chiefly have recourse to this remedy by hunting. When they are upon the chace, they ride across enclosed grounds intersected and fenced by ditches, over which they leap. The English ladies frequently join in the sport, though they sit sideways upon their horses. This manner of riding they have derived from Anne of Luxembourg, consort to Richard the Second, whose example caused it to be introduced as the most becoming manner of riding for women. Thus mounted, they travel long journeys at a smart trot.

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LETTER XLIII.

Religious Exercises of the English Unfavourable to the Youthful Mind—Extreme Rigour of the Sabbath—Puritanical Gloom—Clerical Imposture, and Popular Credulity, at the Commencement of the Eighteenth Century—Stonehenge—Theatres, Newspapers, Tolls, &c.—Anecdote of an English Officer—Rigid Observance of the Sabbath, traced to the Anabaptists—Cheerfulness the Great Object of Religion—Sanguinary Character of English Theatrical Exhibitions—Absurdities of the English Stage—Probability that an English Theatre might succeed at Paris—Ghosts in Richard the Third—*English Dread of Apparitions—Indifference to Comedy.*

London.

To children, the religious exercises of the English afford nothing capable of softening and humanizing their disposition. These exercises do not strike the senses; they are confined to prayers, which never end, and are interspersed with metaphysical or dogma-

tical instructions, that have no effect upon the mind. On the other hand, the service of the Church of Rome, the pictures and statues which adorn the temples, with the variety of ceremonies, processions, salutations, &c., are better adapted to the capacity of young people; as they have a natural turn for imitation, they are seen to crowd together in Catholic countries, to dress shrines, to sing at high mass, and to walk in processions. These exercises nourish that simplicity which becomes their tender years, and gives the mind a pliant turn that preserves the gentleness of their temper, and their disposition to gaiety.

If, in England, we observe the influence of religion on grown persons, we shall see a new source of melancholy. Let us confine ourselves to the country towns and villages —to that part of the nation which has most religion—and we shall find that the Jewish rigour with which they are obliged to keep

the Sabbath, the only holiday they have, is an absolute specific to nourish the gloom of their temper. This rigid observance of the Sabbath is founded upon the laws which the Puritans extorted from Queen Elizabeth; laws which James the First, and Charles the First, in vain endeavoured to meliorate by ordinances, which allowed all sorts of lawful pleasures and amusements after divine service.

These ordinances were amongst the grievances which the Puritans complained of to King Charles, and for which they censured the ministers of the Church of England, who had adopted and published them in their churches. The Long Parliament even went so far as to cause them to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman.

Pious frauds—things which the reformers so greatly abhorred amongst the Catholic clergy—have since been employed by themselves, in favour of the manner of keeping the Sabbath. Near Neot, on the eastern

side of the county of Cornwall, is to be seen a circle of misshapen stones, fixed deep in the earth, and placed there long since by human art. At the commencement of this century, the clergy asserted, and the country people were credulous enough to believe, that these stones had been so many men, thus metamorphosed whilst they were playing at tennis, on a Sabbath day, in open violation of the laws of religion; and there is a small treatise extant, wherein one of the "*Bare-bones*," or "*Praise-God*," family ascribed the existence of Stonehenge to the same cause—not keeping holy the Sabbath.

On this day, the theatres and all houses of entertainment are closed. People are neither allowed to sing at home, nor play upon any instrument. The newspapers—the favourite food of national curiosity—are, in a great measure, discontinued; the watermen are not allowed by law to ply upon the Thames; the tolls to be paid, upon coming

into London, are doubled—and some of them are even tripled. Except during church time, the inhabitants wait, with their arms folded, till service is again celebrated, or till the day is over, without having any other amusement than that of gazing, in "melancholy mood," at those who pass to-and-fro in the streets.

A young English officer, travelling in a diligence from Calais to Paris, refused, one Sunday, to sing a *song*, for his companions, because that was not a *proper day;* or to sing a *psalm*, because that was not a *proper place.*

The principal festivals of the year bring with them an increase of sadness and melancholy. Except during the time of divine service, Westminster Abbey is shut to the curiosity of both natives and foreigners. That curiosity, we are told, is a sort of worldly affection, which should not be suffered to encroach on the pious exercises of a day entirely consecrated to religion.

The over-rigid observance of the Sabbath owes its origin to the Anabaptists. A merchant of that sect, settled at Rotterdam, having one Sunday morning paid his workmen for what they had done the preceding week, was cited before the consistory, severely reprimanded, and excommunicated for violating the Sabbath.

The English, accustomed to view religion in this gloomy light, are ready to fall into every sort of excess which they may think capable of leading them to perfection, by any path whatever. There is no sort of extravagance of this kind that an English head is not capable of. Religion, notwithstanding, is calculated to make men happy; and I fully concur with the writer who says—"He will be cheerful, if he has a cheerful religion; he will be sad, if his religion is of a sad and gloomy kind; he makes his happiness subordinate to it, and refers himself to it in all things that interest him most." Thus, the

ministers of religion are responsible to God, not only for the future, but the present happiness of the people whose confidence they possess. It is an offence against the human species, to disturb the repose which they should enjoy upon earth.

The theatrical exhibitions of the English contribute equally to feed, or rather to increase, the national melancholy. The tragedies, which the people are most fond of, consist of a number of bloody scenes, shocking to humanity; and these scenes are upon the stage as warm and affecting as the justest action can render them;—an action as lively, pathetic, and glowing, as that of their preachers is cold, languid, and uniform.

At the representations of *Macbeth*, *Richard the Third*, *King Lear*, and other pieces of Shakspeare, whatever the most barbarous cruelty, or the most refined wickedness, can possibly conceive, is presented to the view. What these pieces want

in regularity, is abundantly compensated by the choice of incidents of a nature most affecting, and most capable of harrowing up the soul. If in these plays love display itself at all, it is in the most striking effect which filial or conjugal affection can produce.

The English stage has certain usages extremely annoying to a Frenchman, who is not accustomed to them. The last scene of every act is constantly interrupted, and sometimes in the most interesting part, by the tinkling of a little bell, which apprises the music to be ready to play in the interval between the acts. The actresses who perform the principal characters drag long trains after them, which have four corners, like a carpet, the breadth proportioned to the importance of the character; and they are followed by a little boy, in quality of a train-bearer, who is as inseparable from them as the shadow from the substance. This page, sprucely dressed, and muffled up in

a livery made to suit his stature within two or three inches, keeps his eye constantly fixed upon the train of the princess—sets it to rights, when it is ever so little ruffled or disordered—and is seen to run after it with all his might, when a violent emotion causes the princess to hurry from one side of the stage to the other. This he accomplishes with all the phlegm and seriousness natural to the English.

Scenes of battle and carnage are generally preceded by spreading a large thick carpet upon the stage, to represent the field of battle; and it is afterwards carried off, with the dead bodies, to leave the trap doors at liberty for the ghosts, who appear again upon the stage in the acts immediately subsequent to the engagement.

Were these irregularities to be removed, or even were they to be retained, perhaps the English theatre might succeed in Paris; at least it might please those old Parisians,

who, being from their cradle as it were rocked and lulled to sleep by our best performances, would be roused at the representation of Shakspeare's tragedies.

How great an effect would the number of the slain, the massacres, and the apparitions of persons killed in the course of the piece, have upon spectators of this class? In the last act of *Richard the Third*, a crowd of princes and princesses, poisoned, assassinated, stabbed, rise from out of the earth, to curse the tyrant, who is asleep in his tent. Those that had been destroyed by the sword stand in a fixed, immoveable attitude; their visages pale, with their eyes closed, their shirts and clothes besmeared with blood; and they deliver themselves in a sad and lugubrious tone of voice.

It is not difficult to conceive what effect this must have upon the imaginations of the English. The impression made upon young people is so lively and durable, that, although

they have none of those prejudices, kept up in Catholic countries by the belief of purgatory, and several stories relative to that doctrine, there are few nations which, without believing in apparitions in theory, are really more afraid of them in practice, than the English. Children, who occasionally witness these tragic horrors, frequently suffer from painful dreams, or night-mare: they fancy they are haunted by all the ghosts in the tragedy of *Richard the Third*, and by the spirits of all the dead bodies in the churchyards of London.

The English are in general as indifferent with regard to comedy, as they are passionate admirers of tragedy. They are very ready to give up the superiority of the sock to other nations, upon condition of being allowed to have a superior talent for the buskin.

LETTER XLIV.

May-day in London—Milk-women and Chimney-sweepers — National Gravity — Earthquake at Lisbon—Consequent Abolition of Masks.

London.

The first of May is a grand holiday for milk-women and chimney-sweepers. The former, attended by a person concealed and surrounded by a piece of basket-work, covered by flowers and branches, ramble about the streets and go among their customers, dancing, and asking for presents, which are generally given upon this occasion. The great basket or garland of the milk-women is also decorated with pieces of plate ranged in rows, as in a buffet; these moving machines concealing every part but the feet of those who carry them.

The chimney-sweepers are disguised in a

more ridiculous manner; their faces are whitened with meal, their heads covered with high perriwigs, powdered as white as snow, and their clothes bedaubed with gilt paper; and yet, though equipped in this ludicrous style, their air is nearly as serious as that of undertakers at a funeral.

This is the only sort of masquerade at present suffered in England. At the time of the earthquake, in Lisbon, the bishops demanded, in a body, and obtained from the King, a total abolition of masks at all rejoicings, whether public or private.

In all countries, it is true, in proportion to the size of their towns, the inhabitants are prevented by interest, by vanity, by indolence, by satiety, and by the continual clashing of a thousand inferior passions, from having that free and easy cheerfulness of temper which is to be found in country places, under a mild and moderate government. But in England, the peasant, well

fed, well lodged, and at his ease, has as serious and melancholy an air as those wretched hinds in other countries, who are persecuted and harassed by thousands, whose business it is, and who are even sworn, to defend and protect them.

From this gloomy disposition result several effects, the combination of which is the basis of the English character.

LETTER XLV.

Plutarch's Remark, that none but Men of Genius are subject to Melancholy, illustrated by the Aptitude of the English for the Sciences—Bacon, Boyle, Newton, Halley, Usher, Selden, &c.—Constitutional Melancholy the Cause of Revolutions in England—Difference between the Present Times, and those of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth—Arbitrary Character of Elizabeth—Religious and Political Fanaticism traceable to the same Source—Newton and Dans Scotus—Cromwell, and Gray's Elegy.

London.

THERE are some characters amongst the English, that verify what Plutarch says, after Aristotle, that none but those of great geniuses are subject to melancholy. Hence arises the aptitude of the English for the sciences, the depth of which requires that the whole soul should concentrate and, as it were, bury itself in them. This is the spring

of those discoveries which result from the most vigorous efforts of the mind." The labours which lead to these discoveries were, in all ages, the lot of melancholy tempers. England has maintained the reputation for the abstruse sciences which it had formerly for the philosophy and theology of the schools, when men of the greatest genius were occupied with such studies. Those which have established themselves upon their ruin, are infinitely indebted to the plans, the discourses, of Bacon, Gilbert, Boyle, Newton, Halley, &c.

In investigations relating to antiquity, what obligations do we not owe to Usher, Selden, Marsham, and the accurate and laborious lucubrations of the learned men who have raised from their ruins, Palmyra, Athens, and the monuments of Dioclesian at Spalatro?

England presents us with many living examples of the perseverance of its inhabitants

in their attachment to such objects as have once engaged their attention.

The disposition and turn of mind which excite men to such enterprises, and inspire them with the courage necessary for carrying them into execution, is precisely the kind of character required by ancient legislators in statesmen. It is the *atrox animus*, which the philosophy of the Stoics, ever attentive to the administration of public affairs, endeavoured to instil into its followers.

The whole English nation adopts it, constitutionally; that is, with all the ardour that melancholy inspires for those objects upon which it happens to be concentered. This occasions the great sale of those newspapers which are published daily, and which the generality of the English spend a considerable time in reading. Hence arise those revolutions which have so often changed the government of England. Neighbouring countries have also had their revolutions, but less

frequently; they have been trifles in comparison with the disturbances of England.

In the present state of that kingdom, public affairs have become the concern of every Englishman: each citizen is a politician. The case was quite different in the reigns of Henry the Eighth and Queen Elizabeth: the royal authority, then concentrating the whole power, and, like the divine agency, not discovering itself otherwise than by its effects, left the citizen no other merit but that of obedience and submission. The popularity affected by Queen Elizabeth, at the beginning of her reign, gave occasion to the enquiries of certain politicians; but that Princess soon assumed the tone of Paulus Emilius, "to those soldiers who encroached upon the office of Captain-General, and who presumed to say that he ought to have done such and such things, which he had omitted. The General severely reprimanded them for this liberty, and forbade them to pry inqui-

sitively into matters which did not concern them; but only to think of keeping themselves in readiness and their arms in good condition, and to use their arms like Romans whenever he should give them an opportunity. And to increase their vigilance, he ordered that those who were to mount guard should watch without javelins, that they might be more careful and attentive to resist the enemy in case of a sudden attack."

Notwithstanding this, England had been, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, already divided between two parties, which successively crushed each other in the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth; and which, though under different names and forms, afterwards deprived the unfortunate Charles of his life and crown, and hurried James the Second into all the erroneous measures that brought about the last revolution.

Previously to these revolutions, enthusiasm was fed by religious controversies, the first

seeds of which were sown by Wickliffe, in the very bosom of England; controversies which, after producing great excitement in political affairs, introduced that fanaticism into the state which had been before confined to the sanctuary. The genius which animated the English divines who wrote upon justification, in the reigns of Henry the Eighth and his son Edward, afterwards excited the Vanes, the Sandys, the Seldens, &c., when, sapping the foundation of the throne, in the reign of Charles the First, they insensibly paved the road which led Cromwell to supreme power. The last of these geniuses was Newton, who assigned laws to the system of the universe; the first was Dans Scotus, who disputed so warmly upon a *parte rei:* it was the same sort of spirit applied with the same degree of attachment to objects, which had no other difference but that which sprang from times and circumstances. It is this difference which explains

the passage in Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard:—

"Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest—
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood:"

that is—what a number of persons repose here, unknown and obscure, who would have been so many Cromwells, had they been placed in a similar situation, or under circumstances which favoured that usurper!—a thought at once produced and illustrated by that multitude of men, whom the troubles of those times raised from amongst the dregs of the people to the highest dignities in the nation, in which they did not seem to be out of their sphere. All states would, in every age, be subjected to revolutions of the same nature, if Providence did not take care to produce but few Cromwells. Venal souls, fanatical heads, ambitious men, all the instruments of tyranny, are of every age and every country: they resemble wheels in proper order, which, to be set in motion, want nothing but the grand spring.

LETTER XLVI.

Subject of English Constitutional Melancholy, with reference to Public Affairs, resumed—National Pride, the Truest Patriotism—National Pride of England shared by her Women—The Interest which Women take in Public Affairs, instanced by their Attention to the Three Days' Trial of Lord Byron—Historic Recollection of the Ancient Germans, Progenitors of the English—Eligibility of English Women to the Crown, accounted for by their Mental Superiority—Plutarch's Tribute to the Women of Ancient Gaul—National and Individual Renown, reciprocally reflected and enjoyed—Patriotic Ardour of Greece, Rome, and Britain.

London.

THE impetuosity and the perseverance with which melancholy dwells upon such objects as interest and engage it, are the principles that induce the English to concern themselves so much about public affairs. Each citizen, identifying himself with the govern-

ment, must of necessity extend to himself the high idea he has of the nation: he triumphs in its victories; he is afflicted by its calamities; he exhausts himself in projects to promote its successes, to second its advantages, to repair its losses.

Hence that natural pride which immortalized him who first used the expression—"*The majesty of the people of England;*" a pride from which the splendour of the most renowned states of antiquity took its rise;—a pride which, being the first foundation of public strength, and multiplying it *ad infinitum*, subdivides, and in some measure distributes, itself to every citizen;—a pride that produced those wonderful examples of patriotism, which made so shining a figure in ancient history;—in fact, a pride which is perhaps the only patriotism that human nature is capable of attaining.

"*Totam diffusa per artus*
Mens agitat molem ac magno se corpore miscet."

Even the fair sex has its share of this pride, in England; and it displays itself with all the violence which melancholy imparts to the affections and passions. The revolution that subverted the throne of Charles the First furnishes many examples of this sort, which Butler makes mention of in his *Hudibras.*

The trial of Lord Byron*, among many other instances, afforded a strong proof how much English women interest themselves in public affairs. The spacious gallery which surrounded Westminster-hall was filled with all the ladies in England most distinguished for birth, rank, or fortune. They gave a constant and uninterrupted attention to a trial that took up three days, from eight in the morning till six in the evening. This attention, which continued without the least sign of lassitude, reminds one forcibly of the

* For the murder of Mr. Chaworth, in 1765.—*Vide* a subsequent LETTER.

ancient Germans, from whom the English are descended: they were admitted to the counsels of the nation, "*Nec earum consilia aspernantur,*" says Tacitus; "nor did they despise their advice, or neglect their answers: they even think there is something holy, and an extraordinary foresight in them."

It is, possibly, on account of this capacity of the English ladies, which is still as strong as ever, that women have a right to succeed to the crown of England; and their being thus entitled to the succession is fully justified by the reigns of Elizabeth and Anne, whose glory reflects honour upon the whole sex. This right is a grand portion of the jurisdiction common to the women of ancient Gaul, which the fair sex has retained in England. Plutarch repeats, with pleasure, in several parts of his writings, that in the treaty by which Hannibal, in his march to Rome, obtained leave to pass through the dominions of the Gauls, it was expressly

stipulated, that every dispute between the Gauls and Carthaginians should be decided on the spot by Gaulish women.

Whatever does honour to the English character, at the same time throws a lustre upon each citizen. Those men, therefore, whose services, knowledge, and abilities, have contributed to raise the glory of England, meet with all that respect, veneration, and homage, which were the greatest rewards and chief hope of the most renowned heroes of antiquity; an homage paid with a warmth unknown to those who, being the abject slaves of money or worldly prosperity, can neither form a just estimate of actions, nor a judgment of characters, which their weak eyes are incapable of contemplating steadily.

This ardour, which warmed Rome and Greece, flourishes in England, and must necessarily produce the same fruits in that kingdom. The palaces of noblemen, the cabinets of the curious, the houses of citi-

zens—those dark and solitary grottos which people of fortune consecrate to melancholy, in their country retirements—the taverns and inns—the houses where people meet for public diversion—are all adorned with figures, painted or engraved, and with busts of all sizes, made of all sorts of materials, of Bacon, Shakspeare, Milton, Locke, Addison, Newton, and even Cromwell himself.

LETTER XLVII.

Military Glory and Great Exploits, the Result of Disease, of Individual and of National Melancholy — Illustration from Plutarch's Life of Pelopidas— Bayard's Reputation established during his Seven Years' Illness—Battle of Fontenoy gained through the Illness of Marshal Saxe—Ague, the Great Stimulant of Richard Cœur-de-Lion—Melancholy, the Cause of Suicide in the English—Stephens's Inquiry into the Causes of Suicide—Rochefoucault on the Contempt of Death—Love of Singularity, another Cause of Suicide amongst the English— Notion of the Italians respecting Suicide—English Form of Prayer for those who labour under an Excess of Melancholy — Rigour of the English Laws respecting Suicide—Suicide a Disease rather than a Crime — Athenian Law against Suicide— Dr. Donne's Apology for Self-murder — Valour, Suicide, and the Contempt of Death, dependent upon Climate.

London.

MILITARY glory, which, in the annals of ancient chivalry, had placed King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table in the

first class of heroes;—and the great exploits, which, in ages more enlightened, have preserved that glory to the inhabitants of Great Britain—had also their source in the national character of the English, and in that melancholy which is its predominant principle.

"Cato the elder once answered certain persons that bestowed high praises upon a man who was beyond measure daring in the perils and hazards of war, that there was a great deal of difference between setting a value upon virtue, and undervaluing one's life. We are told that Antigonus had in his service a soldier who was very intrepid, but, at the same time, in a very bad state of health. The king asked him, one day, what made him so pale, and of so sickly a complexion? the cause of which was utterly unknown to him. Upon hearing this, Antigonus commanded his surgeons to examine the nature of the disease, and to cure the man, if possible. The physicians so exerted

themselves, that they restored the soldier to health. But, as soon as he recovered, he ceased to behave with the same alacrity, and to brave danger, as before. Antigonus perceiving this, one day upbraided him, expressing his astonishment at the change. The soldier did not conceal the cause, but said to him:—'You, yourself, Sire, have made me less intrepid than I was, by getting me cured of the disease which made me indifferent about life.'"

It results from this fact, taken from Plutarch, in his Life of Pelopidas, that melancholy, in the uneasiness it occasions, both in body and mind, may have a great influence upon valour, considered as arising from the contempt of life; consequently, it may have had its share in the most brilliant actions of the English, as well in their ancient expeditions against France as in their civil wars.

The historian who has given us the life of one of the greatest captains France ever pro-

duced, in an age most fruitful in military virtues, observes, that his hero, Bayard, was troubled for seven years with a quartan ague: yet this was the period during which his reputation was established.

The ill state of health of Marshal Saxe, at the battle of Fontenoy, perhaps contributed to the success of the French: he defeated the English with the weapons in which they put most confidence—the disgust of life, and the contempt of death.

But, without quitting England, history presents us with an illustrious example of this nature, in Richard the First. That prince, on ascending the throne, exerted himself to the utmost in forwarding the expedition to the Holy Land, which his father, Henry the Second, had undertaken, without ever intending to carry it into effect. He set sail for Palestine, captured the island of Cyprus by the way, relieved the Christians engaged in the crusade from their distressed condition,

and even awed Saladin himself by continued acts of valour and bravery, which procured him the name of Cœur-de-Lion.—When this prince set out for the Holy Land, it was doubted whether—from the ill state of his health, as he had been a long time troubled with quartan ague—he would ever return to England.

From the disgust of life, and the contempt of death, arises the first and capital evil which melancholy occasions amongst the English—their inclination to commit suicide.*

Henry Stephens, in his Apology for Herodotus, makes an inquiry into the causes of suicide, and thinks he finds them in the troubled conscience of those who yield to their despair: "When all the forms of a

* What, then, occasions the propensity towards this crime amongst the French? It is an indisputable fact, that from the time of the revolution, at least, the number of suicides, in France, has been far greater, in proportion to her population, than in England.—Ed.

trial are completed in the mind, by an extraordinary process, the sentence is put in execution by extraordinary means."

The last and most extensive of La Rochefoucault's moral reflections, is consecrated to this subject. He there maintains—"That the contempt of death is never real—that men may have many reasons to be disgusted with life, but that they never can have any to despise death. The glory of dying resolutely," he adds, "the hope of being regretted, the desire of acquiring renown, the certainty of being delivered from the miseries of this life, and no longer dependent upon the caprice of fortune, are remedies by no means to be rejected; but how weak and insufficient are these struggles to support the soul against the severest of all trials!"

Remarking, elsewhere, upon the contempt of death, affected by many condemned criminals—"he sees nothing in that contempt of death, but the fear of looking it in the face;

inasmuch," he adds, "that this contempt is to their souls what the handkerchief is to their eyes."

Other French authors have ascribed the suicide of the English to the affectation of singularity, and the desire of making a distinguished figure in the public papers.

The Italians have, in the order of sins, placed suicide the last of those heinous crimes which they call *Accidia*. They consider this sin as the source of a lukewarmness of the soul, of its opposition to the cries of conscience, of the refractoriness of the mind to the dogmas of religion; and finally, of that last and highest pitch of despair, which excites a man to lay violent hands upon himself.

The Church of England has, in its liturgy, a particular form of prayer which is read by clergymen over those who labour under an excess of melancholy. In it, they pray to God "To give the disordered person, according to his promises, the spirit of patience,

consolation; and confidence; to support him against the temptations by which he is attacked; to dispel the troubles of his soul; not to trample upon a broken reed, not to extinguish the wick that is still smoking; finally, to restore to him for whom they pray, that peace of mind, serenity, and joy, which have forsaken him."

The ecclesiastical and civil laws of England, ancient as well as modern, are more rigorous with regard to suicide than those of other countries. As they had the bent of the people to this vice to combat, they have employed extraordinary severity to put a stop to its course. According to these laws, the corpse of a man who has committed *felo de se* is to be buried in the highway, with a stake driven through it.

But nature is too powerful for laws; those against suicide have not been able to stop the progress of it in England; whence it has been inferred, that it should not be so much

considered as an affair of taste and choice, as a disease entitled to commiseration rather than punishment.

Suicide was, no doubt, equally criminal in the eye of the Athenian laws. They ordained, simply, that the hand with which a person killed himself should be severed from his body, and buried by itself.

Suicide has ever found its partisans and apologists amongst the learned of the English nation. Dr. Donne, one of the best preachers in London, in the reign of James the First—author of several moral and even devout tracts—drew up, in English, with the title of *Biathanatos*, a treatise in which he endeavoured to prove that self-murder is not so far sinful, but that it may be sometimes allowed. It cannot be known whether that performance of Dr. Donne have given occasion to a great number of voluntary deaths in England: they are sufficiently excited by the impetuosity which the pas-

sions, in general, and that of love, in particular, derive from melancholy. These passions are the more violent, as they are the more concentrated, and show themselves least externally.

Lucan considers valour, suicide, and the contempt of death, which are generally to be found in the inhabitants of northern countries, as circumstances entirely dependant upon climate :—

> Populi quos despicit Arctos
> Felices errore suo, quo ille timorum
> Maximus haud urit, lethi metus.

M.

LETTER XLVIII.

Progress of the English in the Fine Arts—The English less successful in forming Artists, than Greece, Italy, and France—Their Skill in Ancient Times—Needle-work and Embroidery, in the Time of William the Conqueror.

London.

THE progress of the English in the polite arts has not been extraordinary. Amongst the travellers of that kingdom—that is, the greater part of the nobility and gentry—there are numbers of connoisseurs who indulge this taste with all the impetuosity of their national genius: they have not, however, yet been successful in forming artists capable of vying with those who sprang up so fast in Greece, Italy, and even France, at the command of a Pericles, of the house of Medici, or of Colbert.

To begin with those arts which have drawing for their common basis. They were in the middle ages cultivated in England with a success to which the writers of those times bear testimony. Leo of Ostia, who wrote at the beginning of the twelfth century, speaks, in his Chronicle of Mount Casin, of a shrine which formed part of the treasure of that monastery: the English artist, he says, there lavished silver, gold, and precious stones, with as much profusion as ease. The book of the Anniversaries of the Vatican Basilica makes mention of five suits of silver embroidery, of which three were *de opere Cypriensi et unum de opere Anglicano.*— If the treasures of these monasteries and basilicas, which have preserved the most precious remains of antiquity, and which, on the revival of the arts, furnished them with their first models, were thought to be honoured by English artists, or those who followed the taste of that nation, it is to be presumed that

these performances struck the eye by the fineness, brilliancy, and elegance of the execution, which to this day characterise every piece of English handicraft. Perhaps, the *opus Anglicum* was that species of filagree which required as much patience as dexterity of hand on the part of the artist.

The writer of the exploits of William the Conqueror, bears a testimony equally advantageous to the skill of the English women, who lived in the age of that prince, with regard to embroidery and all sorts of needle-work. "The English women have great skill at needle-work and embroidery; the men are admirable at works of art of all sorts." *

* *Anglicæ nationis fœminæ multum acu et auri texturâ, egregiè viri in omni valent artificio.*

LETTER XLIX.

Hogarth, classed with the Dutch Painters—His Analysis of Beauty — Competition requisite for the Formation of an English School of Painting—Example of Paris — St. Paul's Cathedral favourable for the Experiment—Pictures not Inimical to the Principles of the Church of England —Opinion of the Abbé Winkelman—English Love of Portrait Painting—Sir Peter Lely's Portraits at Windsor—Beauties of the Court of Charles II. — Vandyke's Portraits — Roquet's Opinion of English Portrait and Landscape Painters—England not deficient in the Means for forming a school of Painting—English Taste for Pictures—Lord Chesterfield's Collection—Rubens—Night-Storm in Verona, by Paul Veronese—Duke of Devonshire's Collection, at Chiswick—Vandyke's Belisarius asking Charity.

London.

HOGARTH has painted much, and may be ranked with some of the old Dutch artists. England is filled with prints from his draw-

ings. His *Analysis of Beauty* is a highly metaphysical explanation of an obscure passage in Pliny, which confines the whole art of painting to the delicacy and precision of the contours.

Competition alone can procure England historical painters; and, for that, she has the same resource which mainly contributed to the success of the French school. The advantages derived from the competition set on foot, last century, by the company of goldsmiths, for the pictures which at present adorn the cathedral of Paris, have been abundantly returned by the French school, through the establishment, in Paris, of a more refined taste than previously existed.

The nakedness of St. Paul's cathedral offers a noble field for competition, if the goldsmiths of London would follow that example.

The manner in which those of the reformed religion have understood the Second Com-

mandment—more or less rigidly, in proportion to the greater or less degree of fanaticism in each sect—cannot, at this time, present a very formidable obstacle to the English. The common people of London would not be more inclined, than those of Paris, to worship the persons represented by the pictures in the cathedral: they would regard such paintings in the same light as they do those with which Sir James Thornhill has embellished the cupola of St. Paul's: they would contemplate the picture of the Conversion of St. Paul, with the same eye with which they see it in the *basso relievo* of the great portal of that basilica. The respect which the populace of Rome itself pays to the pictures that adorn St. Peter's, is no more than a bare admiration, excited by the exquisite performances of first-rate artists.

Do the English themselves give the name of idolators to their countrymen, who, having

purchased, in Italy, an original, or a supposed original, picture of the Virgin Mary, by some great artist, place it, with the utmost respect, in their principal apartment?

The fanaticism of the Independents banished all paintings on glass from the churches, where they had remained notwithstanding the Reformation. These paintings, however, have been restored, together with the Church of England, to whose principles figures upon cloth or wood are not more opposite than those upon glass.

The Society of Arts could easily determine how far the expedient proposed might be compatible with received prejudices. By adopting this expedient, St. Paul's church might obtain a decoration that would give it a greater resemblance to St. Peter's—and this was originally intended: a taste for ornaments of this nature, soon extending to other sacred edifices, would open a school of painting in England, which it must be in want of so long

as its artists are not excited by so powerful a motive of emulation.

If we may believe the Abbé Winkelman, in his history of arts amongst the ancients, in which he considers the influence of climate upon the disposition of a people, relative to the arts; the English, on account of this very disposition, and the effect of their climate, have never yet had a painter of reputation. The French, he adds, excepting two only, are in the same predicament with the English, notwithstanding the great sums they have expended, and the endeavours they have made to rise to perfection.

The English have a decided preference for portrait painting. One of the halls of Windsor palace contains all the choicest pieces of that kind: there are a collection of portraits, by Lely, representing the women who adorned the Court of the voluptuous Charles the Second, and forming a sort of commentary upon the Memoirs of the Chevalier de Grammont.

The king, and the noble families of England, possess many portraits by Vandyke; portraits which are, generally speaking, more precious on account of the artist than of the persons they represent.

Roquet, a man of much taste and sound judgment, observes, that the English painters are good colourists; their manner is broad, simple, and bordering upon the grand. They treat the portraits of women with a delicacy and neatness extremely agreeable.

Many of the landscapes which are exposed to public view at the exhibition room in London, seem to confirm the opinion of Mr. R. concerning the English painters in this department of the art. "Few masters," he says, "in this style, surpass the English landscape painters; they are at present in the highest esteem." These paintings have all the glow of nature.

England is deficient in none of the necessary means to form a school of painting,

uniting all the different tastes. The English are, as it were, naturalized in Rome, and in all those parts of Italy which possess the noblest models. A taste for pictures forms an article of their luxury, and they sacrifice to this taste in proportion to their fortune. Often duped by the passion, and by the cant of Italian and national pretenders, yet, amongst a multitude of good copies, many of which were sold for originals, the English are possessed of some originals which might form the foundation of an excellent school.

There are many pieces of the greatest masters scattered about in the royal palaces, melancholy remains of the collections of Queen Elizabeth, or of the first Stuarts; and several private mansions are, in this respect, upon an equality with the royal palaces. Lord Chesterfield has a gallery of paintings, the number, variety, and choice of which are remarkable. The principal piece in the gallery is an Assumption, by Rubens,

treated in the grandest manner, with all the energy, harmony, and truth, which characterize the most valuable performances of that great master. As he has excelled in this piece, he is unequal to himself in the roof of the banqueting-room at Whitehall. The composition of this vast roof, distributed into corresponding portions, of different sizes, is remarkable for nothing but the general heaviness of the design, and for the clumsiness of the figures: we perceive Rubens only in particular parts.

Amongst the pictures in Lord Chesterfield's collection, we may remark, 1st, a Portrait of Lorenzo de Medici, by Raphael. 2nd, a Market-place in Bologna, by Annibale Caracci, or one of his school: the market, the sellers, the buyers, the buffoons, the sharpers, who fill this public square, are true to nature, without sinking into that meanness which most of the Flemish painters have not been able to avoid, but rather seem to have

aimed at; and Hogarth has followed their example. Few masters have been able to catch nature, and represent it in a faithful mirror, without either ennobling or degrading it. This is the "*difficile proprie communia dicere*" of Horace. 3rd, a picture of Paul Veronese, about three feet long, representing the effect of a Night-storm in Verona, with thunder falling upon different parts of the city, and a fire, whose flames mingle with the heavenly corruscations. This was painted after nature by Paul Veronese, who, at the time of this storm, happened to be in a part of the Alps which commands Verona. Having no canvas ready at the moment, he made use of a picture he had just finished, in which he had represented Adam and Eve conversing on their felicity in Paradise. The only parts of the figures that remain are two heads; the rest is covered by the representation of the storm, and Verona in flames: it fills a sort of scroll, which appears unfolded.

There is another collection, no less valuable, at the seat of the Duke of Devonshire, at Chiswick. The apartments of the mansion are disposed in the Italian manner, adorned with ancient and modern busts, with tables and chimney-pieces of marble, principally antique, and extremely curious. Amongst the pictures are—A Holy Family, by Carlo Maratti; the portraits of Guido and his wife, painted, in the same piece, by the hand of that master: the portrait of Mary, Queen of Scots, in her youth—beautiful as Venus, when she arose from the sea: but the Belisarius asking charity, by Vandyke, is one of those master-pieces of art which speak at once to the eye, the understanding, and the soul—one of those performances in which, as Pliny says, *plus exprimitur quam pingitur*: an old soldier, a peasant, a woman, and a young girl, giving with a promptness and sensibility expressed in skilful gradations, which exhibit the strongest and most affect-

ing representation of the various sentiments of those people, concerning a man who had been the ablest and most successful general of the age—who had been a scourge to the barbarians, and a father to his country—who, in the condition to which fate has reduced him, appears to retain something of that air and appearance which distinguish the hero. All that M. Le Beau has collected, in his History of the Lower Empire, concerning the exploits and virtues of Belisarius, is called into action, in this picture, with an art which gives reason to regret that Vandyke has contented himself with the honour of being the king of portrait painters.

LETTER L.

Westminster Abbey — Sculpture — Statues of Kings, in the London Squares — Costume of the Statue of Queen Anne — Monuments of Kings.

London.

WESTMINSTER Abbey contains all that London is possessed of in the way of sculpture, and most of the works appear to be the production of foreigners, such as Scheemaker, Rysbrack, and Roubilliac. Sir Isaac Newton's monument has over it a celestial globe, of extraordinary magnitude, which threatens the more to crush the philosopher, as it is burthened with a female figure not remarkable for lightness. Lord Stanhope's monument, near that of Newton, is equally threatened by a globe with another figure of the same sort.

The public monuments, in honour of sovereigns, reflect little honour on English

sculpture. It is asserted by some, that the horse which bears the statue of Charles I., at Charing-cross, is by the same hand with that of the Place Royale, in Paris. If that be true, never did sons of the same father bear less resemblance to each other.

The statues of the last Kings, which adorn the squares in the new quarters of London, being cast in brass, or copper, have nothing remarkable in them but their lustre; they are, doubtlessly, kept in repair, cleaned, and rubbed, with as much care as the larger knockers at gentlemen's doors, which are of similar metal.

The middle of the area before St. Paul's is adorned with a marble statue of Queen Anne, by whom that great edifice was finished: she is represented in a hoop petticoat, a dress which appears preposterous, because it is seldom to be seen in monuments; a dress, notwithstanding, more suitable, and less ridiculous, than the cuirass, the buskins, the

nudity of the legs, and the whole heroic apparatus, under which our sculptors represent the kings of northern countries:

The raising of statues, consecrated by each succeeding sovereign to the memory of his predecessor, might be a natural object to encourage English sculptors; but England, like other powerful states of Europe, appears determined, by choice, to sacrifice such lasting grandeur to the transient magnificence of those pompous solemnities which amuse the populace only a single morning; while a small part of the immense expences attending them, would be sufficient to erect monuments the most splendid and the most durable. Such monuments are of all ages, and of all countries: their perfection indicates the flourishing state of arts, empires, sovereigns, and individuals, by whom they were reckoned amongst the chief articles of luxury.

LETTER LI.

Resemblance of Westminster Abbey to the Church of St. Ouen, at Rouen—Cathedrals of St. Paul, Notre Dame, St. Peter, and Canterbury—St. Gregory's Romish Monks in England—Monkish Popes—Ascendancy of the Romish Clergy in England—Persecution of the Secular Clery—Monks the only Proprietors of Land—England, the Island of Saints—The "Precarious Contract"—*Similar Effects of that Scheme, and of Turkish Despotism—Ascendancy of the Monks—Failure of Henry II. to restore Order—Appointment of Thomas A'Becket to the See of Canterbury—Baldwin, his Successor—Renewed Contests between the Monks and the Secular Clergy—Hubert, Successor of Baldwin—Henry VIII.—Institution of the Three Choirs—Tomb of Edward the Black Prince—Sword of the Duke of Burgundy.*

London.

WESTMINSTER Abbey was built in the thirteenth century. In the immense height of its roof, and the narrowness of its aisles

and sides, it bears a strong resemblance to the church of St. Ouen, at Rouen, and appears to have been built by the same architect.

The old cathedral of St. Paul was a fine monument of the Gothic taste: it was begun in the twelfth century, by Maurice, bishop of London, at the very time when Maurice de Sully laid the foundation of the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. St. Paul's cathedral had, like Notre Dame, a gallery by the side of the aisle, the cross, and the choir. There was one very remarkable difference between the two cathedrals; namely, that the choir of St. Paul's, being raised a fathom (or six feet) above the floor of the aisle, and divided into three different choirs, to each of which there was a sort of sanctuary, exceeded, by four fathoms, the length of the aisle, which was three hundred and thirty feet. The entire length of the edifice, thus proportioned, exceeded, by three fathoms, that of St. Peter's at Rome.

Such is the disposition of the cathedral of Canterbury, still existing in its original state. This singularity of construction seems to be owing to the extraordinary situation in which the church of England happened to to be, at the time when these edifices were raised.

St. Gregory, having a desire to establish the papal authority over the church of England, which, till then, had been independent, sent a number of Romish monks into Britain; and the principal of these, having been appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, laboured equally for the interest of his employer and for his own emolument.

Succeeding popes continued what St. Gregory had begun. New missionaries succeeded the old ones, in England, where they at first subsisted entirely upon the charity of the secular clergy. Under pretence of easing that body, they shared their functions. Whole swarms of monks, patronized by the

Lanfrancs, the Anselms, the Dunstans, and by most of the English prelates, who were taken out of cloisters, attached themselves to cathedrals, where they formed the lower choir.

The eleventh century beheld, upon the chair of St. Peter, a succession of monkish popes, who retained the despotic principles established in cloisters. These principles regulated the entire conduct of the famous Gregory VII.

To succeed in establishing their authority over Europe, the popes had occasion for assistants, whose implicit obedience should raise no obstacles to their views, nor resistance to their orders; assistants whose private advantage should be connected with the interest of those who set them in action. The cloisters offered them what they required. By the aid of their ancient brethren, they attempted to make the whole body of the church of Rome a monkish community, with the pope for its abbot,

while temporal sovereigns were to be mere executors of its orders. The secular clergy were animated by principles which counteracted their ambitious views; principles founded upon the decisions of councils—a title respected and supported by all the preceding pontiffs.

To surmount this obstacle, some of the predecessors of Gregory VII. commenced, and that pope completed, the business of crushing the secular clergy, either as having committed simony, by continuing to acknowledge the authority of secular princes, in the distribution of benefices; or as guilty of concubinage; because the clergy of the Latin church, after the example of those of the Greek communion, thought proper to marry.* The excommunications, thundered forth on all sides against this indocile clergy, pro-

* In MURATORI'S *Collections*, we meet with some particulars of this kind, which no ecclesiastical historian has entered into. The Mabillons, the Ruinarts,

duced the desired effect: they brought them into * disrepute with the people. The monks availed themselves of this disposition, to secure their first establishments, and to form new ones. England soon had no other proprietors of land but themselves; and the King, and the monks of other countries, for that reason gave it the appellation of the Island of Saints.

To all the titles, admitted by ancient laws, for acquiring property, they had united one,

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the Dacheries, have taken the precaution to suppress such papers as might tend to establish the same facts with regard to France. As to England, see CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, anno 1103; and the details concerning Silvester Giraldus, published by Wharton. *Anglia Sacra, tom.* ii. p. 374.

* *Clerici litteraturâ tumultuariâ contenti; vix sacramentorum verba balbutiebant: stupori et miraculo erat cæteris qui grammaticam nosset.*—WILL. MALMSB; *lib.* iii. The clergy were satisfied with the learning they had hastily acquired; they could scarcely mutter the words of the sacraments: he who had learned his grammar, was considered as a wonderful man by the rest.

remarkably lucrative, which had its rise in Italy, whence it passed into France. This title, which was worthy of the name of *precarious*, was founded upon the feudal law. The abuse of this, by the English monks, excited on the part of the nation a formal remonstrance, and King John gave his subjects all the redress which they requested of him, in *Magna Charta**. The *Precarious Contract* was founded on the uncertainty of possessions in the midst of continual wars and invasions, and under the tyranny of usurpers scattered in the different states of Europe. The same uncertainty of possession has, under the Turkish despotism, made the

* It shall not be lawful for any person to make over his land to a religious house, in such a manner as to take it again, and hold it of that same house: nor shall any religious house so receive an estate, as to deliver it up to him of whom it so received it, to hold of him. But if a person should so give his estate to be held by a religious house, and this shall be made appear, the contract shall be null and void, and that land shall again be put in the possession of the first owner.

Grand Signor's subjects have recourse to the same expedients to secure to themselves and their children the property of their estates. The owner makes a donation of it to some mosque, upon condition that he shall enjoy it during his life-time; that any of his sons whom he appoints shall enjoy it afterwards; and that, at the death of the second incumbent, it shall be entirely converted to the use of the mosque. The Imans and the Dervises are as earnest for such donations as our religious orders; donations which will gradually invest them with the possession of all the estates of private persons, as they had thrown most of the landed property into the hands of our monks.

In the midst of the revolution effected by Gregory VII., the monks, who had attached themselves to the cathedrals, and who, till then, had been contented with the meanest offices and the lowest places in the choir, seized upon the highest, usurped the right of election, and placed themselves upon the

episcopal throne. To attain this end it was necessary for them to proceed to contests and affrays, of which historians give circumstantial narratives, and which were often attended with bloodshed. Henry II. endeavoured to restore order; but he found himself enslaved by the unhappy consequences of his disputes with the Archbishop of Canterbury; and the monks regained, under him and his successors, the ground which they had lost. They appointed Richard, prior of Dover, successor to Thomas A'Becket, in the see of Canterbury; and, after his decease, they substituted Baldwin, ancient abbot of Ford, in Devonshire. The latter, having more of the episcopal character in his composition than of the qualities of a monk, endeavoured to restore the secular chapter of Canterbury to its former rights; as well with regard to the possession of the choir, as with respect to the election of archbishops; and the monks persisting to stand their ground, he raised *altar against altar*. The monks excited a great outcry against

an enterprize that appeared levelled at their dignity, and made their complaint to the court of Rome. By the connection of their interests, they could depend upon the favour of the pope, who supported them with all the weight of his authority, *per furtiva mandata.* The archbishop opposed the papal authority by that of his sovereign: in the conflict of the two powers, this contention degenerated into a sort of war, *non sine sanguine.* The archbishop, having afterwards followed the king in his expedition to the Holy Land, by quitting the game, lost it. The monks saw him depart, *cum parieoribus lamentis plangentes.*

We are indebted for the particular account of this contest to William of Newberry, who, though himself of the monastic order, does justice to the probity, the prudence, and the piety of Archbishop Baldwin, whose opposition to his monks, he considers only as the effect of an indiscreet zeal—*fervor paulo indiscretior.*

This prelate happening to die in Palestine, the monks, in condescension to the king's recommendation, gave them Hubert, bishop of Salisbury, for his successor; but they would not instal their new archbishop, except upon condition of his assuming the habit; a condition which the prelate complied with, by repairing to the monastery of Mestiri, in Cotentin, where he made his religious vows.

A continual war, in which the monks were alternately victors and vanquished, left them masters of the field of battle. Henry VIII. drove them from their monastery, to substitute, in their room, a dean, an archdeacon, twelve canons, and six preachers.

The facts related in this digression, and which have been omitted by the writers of the general history of England, seem to throw some light upon the institution of the three choirs, which the ancient cathedral of London enjoyed, and which that of Canterbury possesses to this day.

The first of these choirs was set apart as a burying place for sovereigns and princes. At Canterbury, it unites the rival houses of York and Lancaster. Among their tombs, the most remarkable, in many respects, is that of the Black Prince, the brave and gallant general, the most accomplished knight, and the hero of his age. Over this tomb is a canopy, from the centre of which hang the casque, the hat, the cuirass, and the sword, which that prince wore in his expedition to France, where his virtuous qualities gained him immortal renown. All the art of the Girardons and the Coustous could neither conceive nor execute any thing capable of speaking so forcibly to the imagination, and particularly to a French imagination, as these rusty arms—this sword so fatal to France. Montereau preserves a monument of this kind—the sword of the Duke of Burgundy—which hangs from the roof of the principal church.

LETTER LII.

Gothic Monuments in England, Normandy, &c.—Lord Orford's Seat at Twickenham—Erroneous Opinions of the English, respecting the Gothic Edifices of Normandy—Discussion of the Question whether they were built by English or French Architects—The Conquest of England, in France, proved by the Families of English Extraction, still Extant in the Latter Country—Evidence in Favour of French Architects—English Architecture indebted to Italian Models—Tylney House—Duke of Devonshire's Seat at Chiswick—Every Englishman his own Architect—Architectural Incongruities in London—English Laws and Customs derived from the Normans—Proofs, that the Law which was established in Normandy, by Rollo, was not the Law which had previously existed there—The Feudal Laws—Succession and Inheritance—The Old Norman Law, English Customs, and Neapolitan Constitutions, form the Primitive Source of the Feudal Law—The Norman Laws inimical to Liberty—Primogeniture—Entails, &c.

London.

ENGLAND is possessed of many Gothic

monuments of the middle ages; such as most of the buildings of Oxford, Windsor Chapel, and some churches and chapels in London. The plan, the elevation, and the ornaments of the latter, are pretty nearly the same with those of most of the churches of Rouen. Windsor Chapel, and those of the colleges of Oxford, are remarkable chiefly for the boldness of their roofs, which are very flat, though of formidable height. In the erection of these edifices, as well as in that of the cathedral of Bordeaux, the architects seem to have taken for their model the great hall at Westminster.

Mr Walpole* has built at Twickenham, in the midst of an agreeable solitude, a delightful country seat, which appears to the eye like the shattered outside of the ancient priories of the monks of Cluni or Citeaux.

* Horace Walpole, who, on the death of his uncle, in 1791, became fourth Earl of Orford.—Ed.

The entrance is by a cloister, low, narrow, and obscure: on the walls are to be seen epitaphs, and a variety of funereal monuments, brought from Italy. The manner in which the house is laid out answers to its entry; a refectory, chapter, dormitory, chapel—in short, all are the same as in a religious house, and, from the manner in which it is constructed—from the furniture, the glasses, the paintings, and the ornaments—we might take it to be a monastery of the thirteenth century. The library unites all the embellishments which architects have endeavoured to give to this style of building; the roof, divided into ogees, is loaded with that species of wreathed shells, which the Gothic architecture seems to have borrowed from the stalactites suspended in those grottos that hold so distinguished a place in natural history. The books are contained in several presses, the panels of which, made after the manner of glass casements of churches, are

of the most precious sort of wood, and of the finest workmanship, upon the most antique models. The seats, the tables, the desks, discover the same regularity and taste. The windows are of old painted glass.

A prejudice, very generally received, gives to the English the honour of building most of the great Gothic edifices still to be seen at Rouen, Amiens, Beauvais, Rheims, Troyes, Auxerre, &c. But the architects who superintended the raising of these structures are still, most of them, recorded in the History of Arts. They were all natives of France; hence we may infer, that those whose names have not reached us were of the same nation. True it is, that, during the troubles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the English extended their dominion to some of the towns just mentioned; but, previously to these revolutions, the plans of the edifices unquestionably had been agreed upon, and the greater part of them carried into effect.

Besides, the English were only a short time in possession of these towns; and, so far were the conquerors from employing their time in embellishing them, it is evident from several monuments, that all the labour bestowed upon these buildings remained suspended during the stay of the English.

The names of certain families, still remaining in these places, are monuments less equivocal of the English conquests. One of our towns in the centre of France, and which, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, served as a theatre to the grandest scene that England ever acted in that kingdom, can boast of families of English extraction, either lately extinct, or still flourishing; as the De Greys, Allens, Bartons, Gibsons, Masseys, Gresleys, Waltons, Hudsons, &c., whose names are very common in England.

Bordeaux, and the other towns of Guienne—places where the English were settled for a constancy — have many edifices for

which they are indebted to English prelates, whose names they have retained: it has not been ascertained, whether they employed such architects as they found upon the spot, or, through national jealousy, had recourse to English artists. This doubt extends even to buildings erected in England: it may be the rather decided in favour of France, since, in the taste for those structures, England has followed France only at a distance. Besides, the particular records of England have, no doubt, preserved the names of the architects who superintended the buildings of most importance: their surnames, formed, according to the custom of those ages, from the names of the places where they were born, must remove all uncertainty respecting the point in question.

The immediate correspondence established between Italy and England, by the custom of travelling on account of health, curiosity, &c., has been a means of enriching the latter

with several fine structures, copied from the great variety of Italian models. But it is at some distance from London that these noble specimens of architecture are to be found. The following may be mentioned:—Wanstead House, and the Duke of Devonshire's seat, at Chiswick.

The magnificent residence of Lord Tylney, to the east of London, the model of which was taken from one of the fine houses built by Palladio in the plains of Padua, and upon the borders of the Brenta, has two stories, in the Italian taste.* There are

* This mansion, the reader may probably recollect, came into the possession of the Hon. William Wellesley Pole (son of Lord Maryborough, and nephew of the Duke of Wellington), by his marriage, in 1812, with Catherine, eldest daughter and heiress of the late Sir James Tylney Long, Bart. This lady died in 1825; and, some time afterwards, Wanstead House was sold by auction, in lots, and pulled down. Mr. Wellesley has since married Mrs. Bligh, a lady with whom he had been some years intimately acquainted.—The earldom of Tylney (Irish) became extinct in 1783.—Ed.

twenty windows in each front, the ornaments of which are equally noble and regular. The principal front is distinguished by a projecting peristyle, which stands upon pillars, and forms a balcony to the first story; on the side are ten windows with larger distances than those in front.

The manison, built at Chiswick, by Lord Burlington, who had given the plan himself, and directed the building in the taste of Palladio; and, perhaps, in imitation of some of his grand edifices, which his lordship might have thought it sufficient to copy. The copy did not succeed, chiefly on account of the climate of England: all the apartments have the air of subterraneous vaults. The principal front has a hexastyle portico, all the parts of which are of as exquisite workmanship as that of the most skilful jeweller or goldsmith. In the disposition of this portico, and its colonnades, the noble architect must have been guilty of some mistake,

which he was unable to rectify, otherwise than by causing the most projecting parts of the inside of the chapiters to be altered at the point of their contact with the body of the building.*

Thus, with more or less taste, every Englishman who builds would fain be his own architect. This fancy, which is utterly repugnant to the art, seems to constitute a branch of the national liberty; and hence arise the most whimsical incongruities,—even in buildings that have occasioned the greatest expense.

To these incongruities, London is indebted for the chief ornaments of its streets. In fact, nothing can be more inconsistent than

* The Lady Charlotte Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington, was married, in 1748, to William, Marquess of Hartington, son and heir of the Duke of Devonshire. On the death of Lord Burlington, in 1753, his Lordship's extensive estates at Chiswick, and at Lismore, in the county of Waterford, thus passed into the Devonshire family.—ED.

the choice and placing of the ornaments with which the sign-posts, and the outsides of the shops of citizens, are loaded. They are chiefly pieces of Doric architecture, executed according to the most rigorous exactness.

The customs of the English carry with them an indication of the source whence they are derived; that is to say, from the law established in Normandy, by Rollo, when the sovereignty of that province was conferred upon him. That this law was the same with that which Rollo found in Normandy, is merely a question of curiosity; but which, on several grounds, might be determined in the negative:—

1.—While Charlemagne was emperor, a century before Rollo, the feudal law, its principles, its maxims and consequences, was as little known as in the reign of Augustus.

2.—The feudal law was the ancient law of the Danes. That law was securely deposited, if not in books at least in the customs, the

tradition, and the memory of men, who were the more able to preserve and transmit it, as it was reduced to a small number of articles, easy to combine, and to transfer from one country to another.

3.—This law was admirably adapted to a government purely military. Now, such was the Danish government—such was that of Rollo—and such was that of the Normans, who conquered England and the two Sicilies. Europe owed to the support which the military government and the feudal law reciprocally lent each other, the servitude which degraded humanity, and left it no other liberty but that species of idleness which constantly attends the profession of arms.

4.—Rollo had given Normandy new laws, the preservation of which he stipulated for, when he caused his son, William, to be crowned.

5.—These new laws were unknown to

Neustria under the Merovingian government. In fact, they established the feudal law, in its utmost rigour, with regard to younger brothers and daughters, in hereditary succession, and all the dispositions by which possessions are regulated. Now, it is evident, from the formularies of Marculf, that, under the first race, the severity of the Salic law was already mitigated with regard to younger brothers and daughters. As to what concerns the Lombard law, by which the two Sicilies were governed before the Normans had conquered those countries, it admitted all the heirs male to equal shares of the estate, even in noble successions.

6.—The new law, having been made common to Normandy and the kingdom of the two Sicilies, is a monument of the Norman conquest so little to be doubted, that the chief articles of the Neapolitan constitution, and of the customs of Normandy, are

explained by each other in the commentaries of the Neapolitan and Norman civilians.

From all these facts, we may justly infer, that the ancient Norman law, the English customs, and the Neapolitan constitutions, contain the primitive source of the feudal law, and even of our common law, with regard to the regulations which it has borrowed from them.

England is, to this day, governed by the Norman law; but everything there discovers the general wish of the nation for liberty, which is crushed by that law. The successions, whether of the commons, or of the nobility, are equally shared with regard to the children of both sexes. The eldest son, who is always preferred to the daughters, in every state of inheritance, succeeds to all the immoveables; except in the case in which the father disinherits him, and chooses an heir amongst the younger sons.

Entails without end have long existed in England. Except in some particular cases, all entails are reduced to two degrees. They are made by single acts; but, generally speaking, by marriage contracts; the husband entailing his estate on the eldest son, and the wife her portion, which generally consists of moveables, on the younger children.

Late Chancellors have farther abridged the term fixed for these dispositions. A father, burthened with the entail, appears before the Lord Chancellor, with a son one and twenty years of age; and the son declaring his consent that the effect of the entail which has fallen to him should cease for the present, a deed, signifying this consent, is delivered to the father, who, from that moment, may use the entailed estate as he thinks proper, just as though the entail had never taken place; and the estate again becomes saleable.

LETTER LIII.

Process of Civil Courts—Appeals—Court of Chancery —House of Lords.

London.

Of civil tribunals, the method of proceeding appears, in its present state, to be reduced to a simplicity which should render it both cheap and expeditious; law-suits are, notwithstanding, in England, as elsewhere, exceedingly tedious, and not unfrequently prove the ruin of both parties. The English are not desirous of the primary and expeditious forms established in despotic states; they regard their method of administering justice as one of the grand advantages of liberty.

All affairs are adjudged upon the spot, in the first instance: those of London, at the courts in Westminster Hall; those of the counties, by the judges, who, at stated times, go the circuits. Upon hearing counsel and

examining witnesses on both sides, they decide causes; but there then lies the right of appeal from their decisions to the House of Lords.

All causes, excepting those in the High Court of Chancery, are, in the first instance, adjudged upon the hearing, but never upon report. This, while it seems to increase, does, in fact, diminish the labour of the judges. They are thus enabled to observe every thing themselves; they hear the parties; all circumstances are laid open, and debated before them; they do not see with the eyes of their secretaries.

The lawyers, not to encroach upon the time and attention of the judges, lay before the Court nothing but the point of law, or the fact which is the subject of dispute. Appeals are made to the House of Lords, by briefs, or memorials. All the peers have seats, and a right to vote at these adjudications; but the presence of three peers is sufficient to render them legal.

LETTER LIV.

Severity of the English Criminal Code—Criminal Causes, under the Government of the Clergy, in France—Protection of the Accused in England —Juries—Quibbles of Counsel—Bigamy and Polygamy—Sentence of Death—Trial by Jury derived from the Northern Nations—English Forms of Procedure contrasted with those of the Courts of Inquisition—Mode of English Procedure illustrated by the Trial of J. P. Hardy, the Servant of Comte Mirabeau, for the Robbery of his Master—Mirabeau's Determination to make that Trial turn to the Benefit of his own Country, and to introduce the Trial by Jury into France—Difference of Opinion between Judges and Juries—Full Report of Hardy's Trial —Sir William Garrow—Sir John Sylvester and Eliza Fenning—Justice Fielding.

London.

WHEN, in a former letter, I said that the criminal laws of England were the very worst in Europe, I meant not to apply such a remark to the mode in which criminals are

put upon trial, but simply to the severe punishment inflicted when the accused is found guilty.

Under the government of the clergy, France quitted its ancient form of proceeding in criminal causes, and adopted that which the Popes had introduced in the Courts of Inquisition, and which the ordinance of 1670 has preserved in many of its parts. Hence, the secret manner of drawing up a process amongst us—the ascertaining of the offence by the judge, when the party accused is not present —the oath which the culprit is obliged to make, with regard to the several acts that are performed in his presence!—in fine, the torture, with a variety of artifices to extort confession, which seems to turn the whole force of the process against the person accused.

The English, notwithstanding their being so long enslaved by priests, have constantly retained the ancient forms, which they make

use of to this day, and which are all favourable to the party accused.

His person is at liberty, upon giving bail, except in capital cases. Our old criminal jurisprudence granted the same indulgence. We meet with a multitude of examples of this in ancient records, and particularly in that of Champagne.

The offence is not ascertained by an act of the judge himself; it is established by the judgment of a jury.

The person accused can challenge twelve jurymen out of four-and-twenty, and without being required to assign any reason for so doing.

If, at the assizes, no prosecutor appear against him, he is discharged, notwithstanding the strongest presumption of his guilt.

He cannot be condemned, till he has been declared guilty by twelve respectable men; and the verdict of these men, which is called the judgment of God and of the country,

must be unanimous, either for acquittal or conviction.

The accused is allowed counsel; but his counsel is not permitted to meddle with, or enter into, any discussion of the fact; his business is only to speak to the point of law, and examine the witnesses. In this, the most idle and ridiculous quibbling is admitted. A man had been brought to trial for having married three wives: he was found guilty by the jury, and the judge was about to pronounce the usual sentence in cases of bigamy. His counsel maintained, that the law which had been enacted against those who had married *two* wives could be of no effect against such as had married *three*. This observation being attended to, the man was acquitted. The sessions papers, printed regularly, with the trials of criminals, the charge of the accuser, and the defence of the accused, present us with a thousand examples of such evasive subterfuges.

The person accused is allowed to call witnesses to his innocence; and every circumstance that can be alleged in his favour is admitted.

The whole judicial procedure passes in public: the only written instrument made use of upon the occasion is the indictment; the rest of the process passes by word of mouth.

The oath of the person accused is not required; that formality is confined to the witnesses and the jury. The Courts set up by Cromwell had extended the oath to the accused; but the custom ceased with the usurpation.

A prisoner, when acquitted, may bring an action for damages against the prosecutor.

Even sentence of death is pronounced in the language of mildness and humanity: "you have been brought to trial," says the judge to the culprit; "you denied the fact of which you were accused, and you put

yourself upon your trial, by God and your country, by whom you have been found guilty. The sentence of the law, therefore, is, that you are to go from hence to the place from whence you came, and thence to the place of execution, where you are to be hanged by the neck till you are dead; and the Lord have mercy upon your soul."

The trial by jury, which is called a trial by God and the country, borders upon the forms of proceedings established by the northern nations in most countries of Europe: it was one of the proofs known by the appellation of *purgatio vulgaris:* the proofs by iron, and by fire, and combats in enclosed lists, formed a part of this purgation, which the English have reduced to a more rational system.

The Courts of Inquisition also adopted, and have retained it, but in the most injudicious form: they have recourse to it only to charge the accused, against whom there is

not sufficient proof. Twelve persons are named, who must assert their belief of the innocence of the prisoner by oath; if, out of these twelve persons, three refuse to bear testimony to the innocence of the party accused, he is again thrown into a dungeon, adjudged and condemned as one attainted and convicted.

The English forms of procedure have an aim diametrically opposite to this: with them every circumstance tends to the acquittal of the prisoner, in conformity to the voice of nature,— "Rather save twenty guilty persons, than put one innocent man to death."

I have had an opportunity of witnessing a trial, in which I was materially concerned, on account of a robbery committed by my servant, Hardy;—I will send you the particulars. It will explain, at once, how these things are managed in England. Hardy was acquitted: in France, he most probably would have been found guilty. Should I

ever be able to return to France, I will exert myself in making this trial turn to the benefit of my country. We must also have trial by jury, according to English law.

The jurymen, who were placed upon a sort of amphitheatre, whence they could see and hear every thing, seemed to consist entirely of tradesmen. As soon as they were seated, one of the judges addressed himself to them in a long discourse, and concluded with a recommendation to the jury to discharge their present duty with integrity and frankness.

Judges and juries are not well agreed with regard to the duties of their office. The judge maintains, that the process is made out by him in the presence of the jury, whom he instructs how to form a decision on the same, when he sums up the evidence and gives the charge. The juries, on the contrary, maintain, that the whole procedure, in all its branches, is referred to them; that the judge assists, merely that his presence may impress

the witnesses and the prisoner with respect, and to aid the jury by his experience and knowledge of law.

This competition, and the jealousy it occasions, rendering both judges and jury equally alert, put the *law* in the place of *man*; they conduct the process and decide the cause. *Man*, on the contrary, supplies the place of *law*, in those countries which have borrowed their criminal forms from the Pope's decretal.

[*The importance which Mirabeau attached to the trial of his servant Hardy—the deep impression which it made upon his mind—and the powerful influence which it had upon his political conduct, after his return to France—would form a sufficient apology, were an apology requisite, for inserting here a full report of the proceedings.*]

Jacques Philippe Hardy was indicted for feloniously stealing, on the 10th day of January last, in the parish of St. Andrew, Holborn, one printed bound book, value 2*s.*, twenty-seven Holland shirts, value 15*l.*, two cotton night-caps, value 2*s.*, six pair of silk stockings, value

40*s.*, two muslin stocks, value 5*s.*, and one muslin cravat, value 4*s.*, the property of the Comte de Mirabeau; and two lawn handkerchiefs, value 10*s.*, and one linen handkerchief, value 2*s.*, the property of Mademoiselle Amelia Henrietta Van Haren, spinster.

The prisoner, being a foreigner, was informed by the court, that he might have a jury of half foreigners; but he said, he chose to be tried by a jury of all Englishmen.

Court. "Give the interpreter the indictment, and let him read it to him in French."

MR. JESTERMAN, *Sworn* Interpreter.

"Ask him if he is guilty?"

"Not in any ways."

"How will you be tried?"

"By God and this country."

(*The jury sworn*).

The indictment opened by Mr. Garrow, counsel for the prosecution.*

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* This gentleman, now Sir William Garrow, was born in 1755; consequently, at the time of this trial, he was only thirty years of age. Early in life he tried his skill in oratory at the Robin Hood (referred to in a preceding note) and other debating societies; schools admirably adapted to qualify him for the distinguished figure which he was destined to cut, as counsel, at the Old Bailey Sessions. Never regarded as a first-rate lawyer, he possessed extraordinary shrewdness, and a superabundant portion of that species of confidence which some might feel disposed to notice by a harsher appellation. The latter quality enabled him to shine pre-eminently in the cross-examination of witnesses; a gentle and modest acquirement, in which he has been followed, though at an humble distance, by

The witnesses examined apart, at the request of Mr. Sylvester * *and Mr. Parke, counsel for the prisoner.*

Messrs. Alley, Adolphus, Andrews, Phillips, and other worthies of our day.

By slow degrees, Mr. Garrow got forward in his profession, and at length obtained the honour of a silk gown. Entering into political life, he was very active during the elections of Mr. Fox, Lord John Townshend, etc. Through the interest of his friends, he was brought into Parliament for Gatton—one of the boroughs disfranchised by the Reform Bill. He afterwards obtained the appointment of Attorney General to the Prince of Wales; from which he was promoted to be Chief Justice of Chester, Solicitor General, and Attorney General. In the last mentioned capacity, he is said to have instituted fewer prosecutions for libel than any of his predecessors for many years. His latest promotion, from which he retired at the commencement of the present year (1832), was to a puisne baron's seat in the Court of Exchequer.—EDITOR.

* Afterwards Sir John Sylvester, Recorder of the City of London. Possessing a remarkably swarthy complexion, he was familiarly termed *Black Jack*, amongst the Newgate tribe, by whom he was cordially detested. The public cannot yet have forgotten the trial of Eliza Fenning, which took place during this gentleman's recordership, some twelve or fifteen years since, on the charge of attempting to murder her master and mistress—Mr. and Mrs. Turner, of Chancery Lane—by mixing arsenic with the flour of which she was employed to make dumplings for the family's dinner. The judicial forms were gone through; the prisoner was convicted, condemned, and executed. This was one of those trials (thank God, there are few such in this country!) which, for the sake of justice, decency, and humanity, ought to be held in everlasting remembrance. By the poor girl's bereaved, heart-broken father, it is to this day remembered in misery and bitterness of spirit. Several pamphlets on the subject were published at the time; the most important of which was, a full report of the trial, with copious notes, by Dr. Watkins.—EDITOR.

"*Mr. Fielding*, * *counsel for the prosecution, opened the case as follows:*—

"Gentlemen of the jury, when I get up after my young friend, Mr. Garrow, it must necessarily surprise you to see two of us to support this prosecution, and two of my learned friends appearing as counsel for the prisoner; but, gentlemen, as you have already collected that the parties here are both foreigners, you will expect from us a particular regard to our duty; you will expect from us a regulated conduct, that we, on the part of the prosecution, should be careful not even to attempt to inflame your passions, nor to aggravate the conduct of the prisoner at the bar; you will expect likewise from my learned friends on the other side, a regulated decorum in the cross examination of the witnesses: in this country, justice is always administered, to the admiration of the world, in such a way as to extort approbation even from the prisoners themselves. The prosecutor is a man of public character; he is a man of great literary fame, and well known in France; the prisoner was his secretary. Gentlemen, in feeling that I am engaged in a particular duty, out of the common track, it is that I assure myself I shall not be chastised by his lordship, in going a little out of this case, in order to

* Nephew of the author of *Tom Jones*. This gentleman became one of the magistrates at the Queen Square Police Office. With a profound veneration for the works of his uncle, he entertained and professed a sovereign contempt for the literary labours of more modern writers.—EDITOR.

account for the conduct of the prosecutor, and the manner in which this prosecution has arisen. The Comte, when he came over to this country, in August last, had packed up a number of very valuable effects; and when I tell you he had lost a manuscript, which he valued infinitely more than the most precious jewel he ever possessed, and which was no less than the correspondence between Voltaire and a gentleman of great literary fame, a Monsieur d'Alembert; and, attributing this loss to the carelessness or neglect of the man at the bar, he became a little angry with him; there was a woman in the family of the name of Champante, and then several things were missing that were brought to England, and amongst the rest the subject of the present enquiry; there were some shirts; these were afterwards found in the box of the prisoner at the bar; therefore, Gentlemen, it is on this circumstance alone, that you are to bestow your consideration; you will hear from the witness, from a lady who saw these shirts in England, who knew them to be the Comte's property; she will tell you the manner in which they were found, and where they were found; and it will be clearly established in proof to you, that these, being the Comte's property, were found in the possession of the prisoner; and it will then become him to give a clear account how he came by them. I should not have stated the other circumstances, but I thought it necessary to assign to you the sole motive for this prosecution; the lady shall stand forth here and tell

her own story; you will from thence collect, whether there is sufficient proof of the felony, and of the guilt of the party; and I am sure you will do by him all that he can wish; if he is clearly proved to be guilty, you will pronounce him so; but if, on the contrary, you are not satisfied of that guilt, you will more cheerfully discharge the other part of your duty, which calls upon you to acquit him."

AMELIA HENRIETTA VAN HAREN, *sworn*.

(The oath explained by the interpreter.)

Mr. Garrow.—"Was the prisoner at the bar secretary to the Comte de Mirabeau?"

"Yes."

"Was there a servant in the family of the name of Champante?"

"The person named Champante was dismissed the service of the Marchioness, the mother of the Comte, and afterwards taken into my service."

"She was in England?"

"Yes."

"When was she discharged from your service?"

"The 19th of January."

"On her being discharged at that time, did you miss any of the property of the Comte?"

"Both of the Comte and my own."

"Did the prisoner live at the house, where the Comte had his apartments?"

"He lived in the same house in England, but not in France."

" Had he any box there ?"

" He had his furnished room in Mrs. Bailey's house, where there were a great number of chests, and drawers, and boxes, which he made use of."

" Had he any box which he made use of, for his own use ?"

" There was one which was part of the furniture of the room, which was appropriated to him, and used entirely for his own effects."

" At the time that Champante was discharged, did you examine the contents of that box ? "

" The next day after she was dismissed, I was sent for while the prisoner was gone out of the house."

" Was this box locked, or open ? "

" It was open."

" Did you find any part of the property of the Comte or your own in that box ? "

" Two handkerchiefs belonging to me, which were marked with the name of Hardy, instead of my own, and two shirts of the Comte's, the marks of which still remain."

" What marks had been taken out, and what marks had been put in ? "

" H., and afterwards P. H."

" Who made the H. on these handkerchiefs—who had marked them originally ? "

" Myself."

" Had you seen and used these handkerchiefs in England ? "

" They were alternately worn round my neck coming from Brighthelmstone, and were lost two days after."

" Have you these handkerchiefs here ? "

" Yes."

" Look at them, and tell us whether you are sure those are the handkerchiefs you had in England, and that you lost ?"

" Oh ! certainly."

" Do you know them by the mark, or by the hemming ?"

" By the hemming, as well as by the mark."

" Are you sure they are the handkerchiefs you found in the prisoner's box ?"

" Very sure."

" Who marked the Comte's shirts, found in that box ?"

" I cannot tell, somebody whom I do not know."

" Have you seen those shirts in England ?"

" I have seen these and twenty-five more that are missing."

" Who was present at the time when you searched the box ?"

" I and the Comte examined it first ourselves, then we found one ; then I called up a girl that was in the house, and that girl saw me find the other handkerchief. I was alone with the Comte when I found the two shirts, and the handkerchief.

" Were you present at any time when the prisoner was told that these things were found in his box ?"

"Yes."

"What did he say?"

"He said, appearances were against him, but that he must be heard; and then he was asked, why did you go out to give notice to Madame Champante, that she was suspected? To which he answered, when I think any body is in danger of being hanged, I must inform them."

"Did he say any thing about these handkerchiefs and shirts being found in his box?"

"He said it might have been a mistake of Madame Champante, when his own linen was brought back; and when the change of the mark was observed to him, he answered nothing."

Mr. Baron Perryn.—"Do you know who washed the Comte's linen?"

"She is here; I do not know her name."

"Did the same person wash the prisoner's linen that washed the Comte's?"

"I do not know."

Mr. Garrow.—"Was this linen clean or foul?"

"Clean; one of the handkerchiefs had been put round my neck, but it was clean."

Cross-examined by Mr. Sylvester.

"Be so kind as to ask this lady, how long this man had lived with the Comte?"

"Some few months, while he was in France, but had never lived in the house till he came to England."

"Whether the Comte and she came from France together, or whether the Comte came first in a hurry?"

"We came together, the Comte and I, in a post-chaise, and the prisoner on horseback."

"Did you leave Paris together?"

"Yes."

"What was the occasion of the Comte's leaving Paris?"

Mr. Fielding.—"Your Lordship will forgive me; but, being counsel for foreigners, I am a little more attentive than I should perhaps be on another trial; I should hope that any attempt to throw any imputation on the prosecutor will be corrected by your Lordship."

Mr. Justice Buller.—"I cannot correct it, if it be evidence; because, thank God, we live in a country, that, whether a man is a native or a foreigner makes no difference."

Mr. Sylvester.—"I certainly will ask no improper question, nor any question I would not ask an English person, standing there. Why did you leave Paris?"

"The Comte said he was tired of being in France, and I wished to see England."

"Do you mean to say, upon your oath, that was the only reason why the Comte left Paris?"

"There was nothing said by the Comte, and I desire it may be asked of the Comte himself."

"When you came to England, by what name did you go?"

"The name of Van Haren; and I desire you would call a number of witnesses which are here to prove it."

"Ask the lady whether she did not go by the name of the Countess of Nara?"

"Never in her life."

"Ask this lady how long she has lived with the Comte, either here or in France?"

"Do you mean to ask how long I have been acquainted with the Comte?"

"How long have you lived together in the same house?"

Court.—"Explain to her that we do not want to know her connections."

"Since I arrived in England."

"When Madame Champante was dismissed, did you not examine at that time, your's and the Comte's linen, and other property?"

"I examined my linen, and found a good deal missing, to which Champante answered, that it was among that that we left in France; to which I replied, that was impossible, for I have had these two handkerchiefs in London."

"Ask her if she did not leave Paris in some confusion and hurry?"

"Yes, we were glad to get into England."

"Whether she did not leave Paris before she had collected all her property and things?"

"I had collected all my effects before I left Paris, and put them in boxes, with orders that Madame Champante should bring them to the place where I was

going; and the Comte gave orders to the prisoner to the same effect."

"Did not the Comte leave Paris in such a hurry, as to leave part of his property behind?"

He left part of his effects, which the prisoner and Champante were intrusted to bring, and which they left behind of their own authority."

"Did not you order part of your property, and the Comte's, to be left with Madame Julie in France?"

"Nothing of what concerned the boxes."

"Did you and the Comte leave any thing behind there?"

"Madame Julie came to the house, and took away some busts of porcelain, but these had nothing to do with the boxes."

"Do you mean to say, that all the Comte's linen was packed up, and that you left Paris deliberately and at your own leisure?"

"All the Comte's and my own; we had no other precipitation, but to get to the packet boat in time."

"I ask, from Paris?"

"No."

"Did you know at Paris when the packet boat went?"

"We did not know exactly; one said it went off at one time, and another at another, and we thought it best to go."

"Does not it go at every hour from Calais?"

"We did not go by Calais."

"By what way?"

" We took the packet boat, which was to bring us from Dieppe to Brighthelmstone, but it brought us from Dieppe to Shoreham."

" Do not these packet boats go from Dieppe every day, and every hour in the day? "

" We asked, and received for information that it was not so; therefore we hired a packet of our own."

" What was the occasion of the hurry, that you was obliged to hire a packet of your own, and not wait for the packet? "

" Because we feared contrary winds."

Jury.—" That was after you got to Dieppe; did you leave Paris in any hurry? "

" No, we were to have gone off the night before, and we did not go off till the next morning."

" This box that was examined,—was the room in which it was, open? "

" It was open, because Mr. Hardy had run away in such a hurry to Champante, that he had not time to shut his room."

" How did you know that it was his intention to go to Champante? "

" He had asked the Comte's leave to go, who had forbid him; notwithstanding that he went, and was followed by Mr. Dawes, who saw him go to Champante's lodgings."

"Did not the Comte order him to go to Champante?"

"He forbid him to go, and said he would go himself."

" Had he ordered him that day to go? "

" Not at all."

Jury.— " Was there any lock on the box? "

" I do not know; it was open."

Court.—" Ask her a little more about the box,—in whose room was it? "

"In Mr. Hardy's own room, in Mrs. Bailey's house."

" Was it in the one pair of stairs or the two pair? "

" In the garret; the house is three stories high, and garrets over; this was in the third pair of stairs."

" Did not you mark your linen with the first letter of your name? "

" With nothing but an H., because it is my family name."

" Do you know whether that room of the prisoner's was usually kept locked or not?"

" I never was in the room but in day time, when Mr. Hardy was there; then it was open.

" *Mr. Baron Perryn.*—Was it open when you came to search? "

" It was open, as Mr. Hardy had not had time to go up. One night I was obliged to go up, being ill, to call somebody to my assistance, and the room was then locked, and he was in it, and the key withinside."

(*The handkerchief produced.*)

" *Mr. Sylvester.*—There was a P. on this? "

" Yes."

" Who took out that P.? "

" I took it out myself, because there was no intention of prosecuting, before the papers were found to be missing."

"Then you yourself took out the P.?"

"Yes."

Mr. Fielding.—"Have you any doubt whether these handkerchiefs are yours or not?"

"I am sure of it; I know these two hankerchiefs, by having been used to wear them round my neck; I had four more, they were lost."

"Did not you produce these handkerchiefs before the justice?"

"Yes, and it was the justice who desired me to leave them in the state they were."

"*M. Baron Perryn.*—When was this mark put in?"

"It was put in after it was taken out of the box."

"Into both handkerchiefs?"

"The red H. was left, but the black H. was put in by myself, the red H. was badly done; from one handkerchief I took away P. H. in red, and substituted H. in black, and in the other that had the red H. I only took away the P. and left the H. there."

Mr. Sylvester.—"Is all this since you found them in the trunk?"

"Yes."

"What is become of the shirts?"

"Here they are."

"What mark is there upon the shirts?"

"M.; some of the Comte's were marked C. M.; others I. B.; and those that belonged to that set were marked only with an M."

"Did you put that mark upon the shirt?"

"No."

Mr. Baron Perryn.—"Had they additional marks on the shirts besides the M., when she found them in the box?"

"No."

"Are they just now as you found them?"

"Yes."

"Who gave out the Comte's linen to wash?"

"Sometimes myself, but very seldom; almost always Champante."

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT *sworn.*

Mr. Fielding.—"Sir Gilbert, I believe you attended the Justice?"

"I was there at two examinations, but not at the first."

"Was you there at any time, when any question was asked the prisoner, relative to these shirts and handkerchiefs?"

"Yes, I was; I think he said of the shirts, it must be a mistake of the washerwoman's; of the handkerchiefs, he said they were his own, that the Comte never had any such."

Mr. Parke.—"Did you not understand either from the Comte or this lady, that they had left Paris in a great hurry and confusion."

"I have heard from the Comte a history of his own life; I have been acquainted with him."

Court.—"It certainly is not necessary to go into his whole history."

"He came away from Paris in no disgrace, but that he had reasons for leaving Paris is certain."

"And that he left it in a hurry?"

"For no reason that should make him afraid to go back; the fact is, that, from his account, a number of things were lost."

"Did not he come to avoid a *lettre de cachet?*"

"No, Sir; he apprehended such a thing might come; he had lost a law-suit, and he had had disagreeable explanations with the keeper of the seals."

Mr. Fielding.—"My Lord, being aware of this, there are several noble personages, and my Lord Peterborough I see there, who will say what he knows of the Comte."

Court.—"If Mr. Sylvester means to give evidence to impeach the Comte's veracity, this evidence will be proper to meet it."

Sir Gilbert.—"I am sure every man will think as I do, that he is a man of perfect honour, that there is nothing in his conduct reproachable."

Mr. Fielding.—"I am extremely glad Sir Gilbert has given this idea, because certainly my learned friend did drive at that."

Mr. Parke.—"Then we need not trouble Lord Peterborough."

Court.—"Were the handkerchiefs before the magistrate claimed as being the Comte's?"

"I am not sure; I was inaccurate in the expression, but I meant *they* never had such, and he said they were his, and that they never had such."

Mr. Fielding. — "They were produced before the Justice as the property taken?"

"Yes; I remember perfectly this lady gave the same evidence, as to their being hers, as to the marks."

Mr. Sylvester.—"Were they not in the commitment all called hers—the Comte and this lady live together?"

"Yes."

"When they were examined, they gave evidence of several other things, besides these, that were lost?"

"At the third examination, the Justice thought proper to put the handkerchiefs out, but he reserved only the shirts, which shirts were the Comte's."

Mr. Garrow.—"And the Comte has since been advised to insert the handkerchiefs in the indictment."

Court.—"What reason did the Justice give?"

"This reason; he asked a friend of mine, in whose custody they had been; he said, in the custody of Champante, as her maid; he said, that for that reason he thought that they could not be considered as a theft."

Mr. Garrow.—"He was mistaken; the custody of Champante was the custody of her mistress."

JOHN BAYNES, *sworn.*

"I was present before the Justice at this examination; I rather differ from Sir Gilbert in one respect, which is this; I remember the question being put to the prisoner relative to these handkerchiefs. He said the Comte never had such handkerchiefs; for I remember one particular expression, that when he was at Paris, the Comte had wanted to get some such handkerchiefs of

a woman, and that she would not trust the Comte without he would answer for the payment; the result of it was, he claimed them as his own: he certainly claimed them as his own."

ELIZABETH DOWN, *sworn.*

"I am maid-servant to Mrs. Bailey; Comte de Mirabeau has apartments there."

Mr. Garrow.—"Do you remember the time that the maid-servant was discharged?"

"Yes."

"Was you in the prisoner's room at any time when Madame Haren was there?"

"Yes."

"What did you see pass at that time?"

"The lady took me up into the servant's room."

"Do you remember when that was?"

"No, I cannot say; the maid-servant was discharged on the Sunday, and this was on the Monday: the lady bid me hold my lap, and she gave me some things out of Mr Hardy's box."

"What things did the lady take out of the box?"

"There were some shirts and stockings; I did not take particular notice. She took a handkerchief out, which she said was her's; it was marked P. H. I.; I saw the mark."

Mr. Sylvester.—"You do not understand French?"

"No."

"And the lady does not understand English?"

"No."

" So that you could not have much conversation?"

" No, Sir."

Mr. Garrow.—" But she communicated that to you as her own?"

" Yes."

" Look at these handkerchiefs, were those the sort of marks?"

" It was such a mark as that; it was marked with red silk."

Mr. Sylvester.—" All you know is, that it was a white handkerchief?"

Mr. Garrow.—" In what way did the lady communicate this information to you?"

" No particular way; I cannot understand her, only I went up along with her; she showed me by some action it was hers."

Court.—" Did she say any thing to you that you understood?"

" No; she took up and opened it, and bid me take notice that was her handkerchief."

" What word did she make use of?"

" She bid me take notice—she showed it to me, so."

" Did you conclude from that that she was claiming it and noticing of it?"

" Yes."

Mr. Fielding.—Did she say, *dis mine?*"

" Yes."

Mr. Sylvester.—" Was the door open?"

" Yes."

"And the box was open?"

"Yes."

Mr. Baron Perryn.—"Was it the handkerchief that was marked the P. H. or the H. only?"

"P. H."

Mr. Sylvester.—"She bid you hold your apron?"

"Yes."

"In what language?"

"All the things were taken out and put in my apron; I understood her in a good many things."

Mr. Baron Perryn.—"Did she give you any reason to think, at the time, that the P. had been added to the H.?"

"No; she made no pretence of that sort at that time."

Mr. Garrow, to Mademoiselle Haren.—"Madame, do you understand a little English?"

(*In English*). "I can understand more than I talk."

"Can you tell me in English whether the handkerchief you have produced is yours?"

"It is mine?"

"Are you sure it is yours?"

"Yes."

"Did you show it to this little girl when you took it out of the trunk?"

"Yes."

Mr. Sylvester to Down.—"Then all the shirts were taken out?"

"Yes."

"Did they claim any of the shirts when taken out?"

"No, nothing but that handkerchief."

Court.—"Who carried the things out to wash?"

"The lady gave them."

"Were the Comte's things and the secretary's carried out together?"

"I believe they were."

"Did they come home together?"

"I believe they did."

COMTE DE MIRABEAU *sworn.*

The oath translated into French to him, by the interpreter. Examined by Mr. Fielding.

"Ask the Comte, if the prisoner lived with him as secretary, and when?"

"Yes, about fifteen months, but I cannot ascertain the day upon oath."

"Do you recollect when your female servant, Champante, was dismissed?"

"About six weeks ago: there are several witnesses here, can prove the day; I do not recollect the day."

"How soon after she was dismissed was it that you, in company with the lady, went up to search the box of the secretary, in his room?"

"The next day."

"What led to that examination?"

"The circumstance of Mr. Hardy going to the Bell Inn, Holborn, to let this Champante know that she was suspected, and that I meant to search her things, which circumstance induced me to suppose Hardy to be an

accomplice, and was the reason why I went up stairs in order to search."

"What passed when you went up stairs in company with the lady, and examined the box?"

"Almost upon opening the box, at top, under a very thin covering of linen that was there, two shirts were discovered that were mine; these are the shirts that were taken out of the box."

"Was there any thing else taken out of the box?"

"I was not present at the time when the handkerchiefs were found."

"When did you see the prisoner after this?"

"The moment after, and the moment before; for I had found him at the Bell, in Holborn, where I had forbid him to go."

"What passed between you and the prisoner after this discovery?"

"I told him of the circumstance of his going to give notice to Madame Champante of her being suspected, after the positive orders I had given him; and the circumstance of finding afterwards the effects in the box, persuaded me that he was an accomplice in this theft, of which Madame Champante was suspected, and therefore I ordered him to go out of the house directly."

"What answer did the prisoner make?"

"The prisoner said, 'with respect to the notice which I have given to Madame Champante, appearances are against me, but, Monsieur le Comte, if you was to see any body likely to be hanged, you would tell them to

make their escape; with respect to the shirts that have been found in my possession, you know very well the neglect of Madame Champante, and her disorder; it might have happened from neglect of hers, or a mistake of the washerwoman."

"How soon after this was it that you applied to the magistrate on this business?"

"At that time I did not intend to prosecute the prisoner, and so far was I from such an intention, that I told him to come to my house, when certain boxes, which we expected to arrive from France, were come, in order that he, the prisoner, might ascertain what effects there were that belonged to himself, and what effects Mrs. Champante claimed, and what were belonging to me, if they could be found: accordingly Mr. Hardy came several times to me after that, in order to enquire whether the boxes were arrived, and at each time I asked him where he lived, and his answer at each time I asked the question was that he did not know the name of the street; it was only from the time his box arrived that the prisoner ceased coming to my house; the box came on Saturday, and the Sunday morning after, I saw the prisoner at Mr. Spilsbury's; there I told the prisoner to come to me on the Monday following, because I had a letter to give him; he asked me what that letter was, and if the box was arrived? to which I answered in the affirmative; he promised me to come the next morning at nine, but never made his appearance; and it was only through the prisoner's not coming to his appointment

that I was convinced of his bad intentions towards me. I went to Bow-street on the Monday."

"What day of the month was that Monday?"

"I do not remember, but it may be known by the warrant itself."

"Was you present when the prisoner was searched, —when he was apprehended on the warrant?"

"I was not present when he was taken; I was then in the House of Commons, but I was present when he was examined."

"Did you see any property of your's, of any sort, taken from him?"

"Upon examination, the prisoner produced two packets of a singular nature, which persuaded me there was some manœuvre going on at Paris against me; and this paper, together with a small book that belonged to me, was found in the prisoner's pockets, and was delivered to the Justice of the peace."

"What was that book?"

"A number of the Journal of Monsieur, th e King of France's brother, of which I have other copies by me."

"*Mr. Sylvester.*—A number of a book called Journal de Monsieur?"

"The Justice ordered the packet to be sealed, and deli vered to the constable who had the prisoner in care."

"*Mr. Parke.*—Was not Madame Champante dismissed the night before you spoke to the prisoner about the shirts?"

"Madame Champante was sent away before ever I spoke to Mr. Hardy about these shirts."

"Had not Madame Champante the sole charge of your linen, and Madame Van Haren's?"

"Madame Champante never had the care of my linen, because a lady's woman in France never takes care of the linen of the men."

"Did you understand, when Champante was dismissed, that Madame Van Haren had expressed herself, that every thing was right?"

"When Madame Champante was sent away, I and Madame Van Haren doubted not, nor do we now doubt, Madame Champante had robbed us."

"Did you then express your suspicions to the prisoner of that?"

"Oftentimes, and the more particularly as at that time I did not suspect the prisoner: I spoke to him rather in confidence than suspicion."

"What was your motive for suffering Champante to go away, when you suspected she had robbed you?"

"What do you mean by permitting her to go?"

"Discharging her."

"She was dismissed merely because she was thought a thief."

Mr. Garrow.—"You are not quite correct in that answer; he says, in France it is the principle to turn away a thief."

Court.—"If you was at that time convinced that Champante had robbed you, as you now say you was, why did not you prosecute her?"

"At that time I had no intention to prosecute her,

nor had I any intention to prosecute the prisoner, or any body, for such trifling things as shirts; the business of this prosecution is of much more importance, and if not of such importance, the prisoner would not be supported in his cause."

"The next morning after Champante was discharged, what did you say to the prisoner?"

"It was not discovered till the next morning, that the shirts were missing, when I told the prisoner of it; that these shirts were there, and that there were several other shirts and effects to a great amount missing; I was so far from suspecting the prisoner's probity then, that I told him that Champante had committed the theft, and that if she concealed these things anywhere, or if she had pledged them anywhere, he should take them out: the question had preceded the discovery, and therefore the prisoner said at once, she lives at the Bell: as soon as the prisoner was made acquainted with the discovery of the shirts, then he said, he did not believe she was at the Bell, and that she was gone away that day; I then proposed to Hardy to go and see whether she was at the Bell, and then I several times after forbid him to go, and it was then the prisoner went out, and was traced to the Bell, from which circumstance my suspicions of the prisoner were founded."

"Before Hardy proposed going to the Bell to Champante, did not you propose to him to go to the Bell to ask where these shirts were?"

"No."

"When you came to the Bell you found the prisoner there?"

"Yes."

"Did you ask Champante about your shirts, and what did you say to her?"

"The first thing I said, upon my coming into the room, and seeing Hardy there, was, what are you doing here, Sir? The prisoner answered, I came here to see whether your shirts were here: I told him I had forbid him; when I came to speak to Champante, I told her I missed a great many shirts, and asked what was become of them."

"How many did you say?"

"I think seven-and-twenty, but I cannot be sure."

"Did not Champante, in your presence and in the presence of the prisoner, say, that you had but sixteen in England?"

"No, so far from saying that I had no more than sixteen shirts in England, she excused herself, by saying,—at the house where you lodged every thing was open, what would you have me say to the matter; look and examine my things."

"Did she then offer to open all her trunks for you to see whether any thing was there?"

"She did not say, look into my boxes, because she had none; she had parcels: but I am not arrived to this time of life, without knowing, that when any body says, look into my parcels or boxes, I am to understand that nothing is to be found there."

"Tell him, he is only to answer to facts, without making his own deductions."

"If I am called to speak the truth I must say the whole truth."

"Did not the prisoner return with you to your lodgings?"

"He followed me, but I do not know whether he came into the house the same time with me."

"Did the prisoner come to your lodgings after you?"

"I cannot say upon my oath, whether he came in at the instant; I believe I saw him a little time after."

"After the prisoner returned to the lodgings, did not he, of his own accord, produce his box before you and Madame Van Haren?"

"He did not offer his box to be examined by me, the things had been examined before, and his effects were then upon the stairs."

"But he did not produce his box?"

"No."

"That day you discharged him?"

"That day, and that instant."

"Did you pay him his wages?"

"I paid him nothing, because I owed him nothing; he was indebted to me."

"How many months had he served you?"

"I cannot ascertain upon oath the precise time, but I arrived in England in the month of August, and he was from thence."

"What had you paid him?"

"I do not think I am bound to answer that question, neither can I do it, unless I look over my books of stated expenses."

"Had you given him money?"

"Yes, before witnesses."

"How much?"

"I do not think myself bound to answer that; neither can I do it upon oath, at the present moment."

"Did you give it him for wages?"

"Yes; that will be seen by the civil action, that is to be tried."

"When was that civil action commenced by the prisoner?"

"By way of recrimination, three or four days after he knew that the warrant was issued out against him, as appears by the writ."

Mr. Sylvester.—"Desire him not to make a speech, but to say the dates?"

"The writ will certify much better than my memory."

"When was you served with that writ? When was the prisoner taken up?"

"More than a week after."

"After the writ was served upon you?"

"Yes, but the warrant was obtained three days before."

Court—"For what sum was you arrested?"

"He claimed thirty pounds."

Mr. Parke—"Did you say what wages you would give him?"

Mr. Garrow—"We are trying the right of the man to recover on the assumpsit of the civil action."

Mr. Sylvester.—"It is very unfortunate that this gentleman, the Comte, makes a speech on every question we ask him, by which means our questions lose their effect. Did the Comte, before he took out a warrant against the prisoner, ever see him at the house of Mr. Spilsbury, his printer?"

"Yes, I saw him on the Sunday morning; I only got the warrant on a Monday."

"You said nothing at that time as to the dishonesty of the prisoner to Mr. Spilsbury?"

"I told Mr. Spilsbury before that, that I had strong suspicions against him; and as Mr. Spilsbury was printing my work at that time, and the proofs came through the prisoner's hands, I cautioned Mr. Spilsbury's son not to trust the prisoner with the proofs any more, because the prisoner was turned out of my service."

"You said nothing to Mr. Spilsbury's son about the prisoner having robbed you?"

"I did not know at that time Mr. Hardy had robbed me."

"But it was after the prisoner had left your service?"

"I never thought of prosecuting the prisoner, on account of this trifling matter of shirts; I never thought of denouncing the prisoner a thief on that account; but when the box came which certified to me I had

lost effects of much greater consequence; then it was I determined to prosecute him."

"*Prisoner.*—I refer my defence to my counsel."

"MARIA THERESA CHAMPANTE *sworn.*

Jury.—"We wish that the other witnesses that are for the prisoner, may withdraw."

Interpreter.—"She does not understand English at all."

Mr. Sylvester.—"Was not you servant to Comte de Mirabeau, and Madame Van Haren?"

"I do not know Madame Van Haren, I know Madame Van Nara."

"Do you mean that lady?"

"Yes."

"Was that the name she used to go by?"

"I went into her service when she bore that name at the hotel."

"What name did the lady go by in England?"

"I never knew her by any other name, than by Madame Nara."

"In what manner did the Comte and Madame Nara leave Paris?

"The Comte made his escape from Paris, and was near a league from Paris, at a friend's house."

"Who was with him there?"

"He went from the house by himself, in a street called Rocques de Loyne."

"What orders had the servants when he was gone?"

"The Comte had no domestic but myself, the other domestic he had sent off at twenty leagues' distance, that he might not know he was leaving Paris."

"Did you leave Paris in a great hurry?"

"Yes."

"Had you time or leisure there to pack up all your things?"

"No, we had no time; we put up the linen together, which the boxes would not hold; we put it in a sack; we had orders to deposit it with Monsieur Goddart, a friend of the Comte's."

"Did you take care of the Comte's linen, as well as the lady's?"

"At Paris the Comte had a servant who took care of his linen, and I never had the care of the Comte's linen in particular."

"Do you recollect what linen was packed up?"

"I cannot tell the quantity of linen, but Madame Nara took an account of it."

"Do you know the quantity of linen the Comte had in London?"

"I never knew it."

"Who gave it to wash?"

"The lady herself."

"Who gave out Hardy's linen to wash?"

"He used to give it to me, and I used to give it to the washerwoman."

"Did you give the Comte's, and Madam Nara's linen to the same washerwoman?"

"Yes, the same washerwoman, and made out a bill for Mr. Hardy's linen and the Comte's."

The Court and the Prosecutor's Counsel conferred some short time, and then the Court said,

"Sir Gilbert, the prosecutor has consented to drop this prosecution, but only on condition of the reason of his perseverance being made public: he thinks that necessary."

Sir Gilbert Elliot.—"I am able to give that information, because this prosecution was begun and persevered in by my advice.

"The Comte dined at my house, at the time he received the first information, that his boxes returned from France empty. He asked me what he had best do? I advised him immediately to arrest Hardy, as the best chance, and he immediately took out a warrant. Some days after, he was arrested at the suit of Hardy, which certainly appeared to him and me a recrimination: now, this public explanation is necessary, because it has been insinuated that this is a malicious prosecution: but my reason for advising the prosecution at first was, to recover the property; and the reason for persisting in it was this, that at the public examination of the prisoner in Bow-street, some of the prisoner's friends were present at the time, and he was advised to reserve his defence; but he asked whether he might not make his defence then, because he said he would show the Justice that the Comte was not a person that was to be believed

on his oath. When I heard that, I advised the prosecutor to persevere in this prosecution, as I had then known him a great many years, and had been his schoolfellow, and had as full a conviction of his honour as I have of my brother's."

Court.—" Sir Gilbert, you will take the trouble to tell the Comte from the Court, that there is nothing has dropt that throws the smallest imputation on him; he has acted very wisely, and his honour is not in the least degree impeached by any thing that has occurred in this prosecution."

Mr. Sylvester.—" I must tell you one thing, that two persons whom you do not know applied for the money before the arrest."

Court.—" The attempt to throw a stain on the Comte's honour was very improper, because it is not the same thing for a Frenchman to run away as it is in England; but Sir Gilbert Elliot says, that he knew him in France, and that he was unfortunate in a law-suit, and it was necessary for him to quit the country."

Sir Gilbert Elliot.—" He had a conversation with the Keeper of the Seals, and was rather lively, and he thought proper, right or wrong, to print that conversation.* "

* It may be a matter of some interest to the reader, to know the cause of Mirabeau's leaving France. He had presented a memorial to the Keeper of the Seals; which memorial was immediately suppressed by an injunction from that Minister. Mirabeau, in consequence, called upon the Keeper of the Seals—was not admitted—

Court.—" Gentlemen of the Jury, you will find the prisoner not guilty; for there is no ground for this charge against him."

" NOT GUILTY."

Mr. Baron Perryn to the Interpreter.—" You will tell Mr Hardy, that the Judge that tried him thinks there is no imputation on his character, from the evidence."

Tried by the Second Middlesex Jury, before Mr. Justice Buller.

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addressed him several times by letter—and ultimately obtained an interview, and had a long and interesting conversation with him.

Immediately afterwards, Mirabeau, under fear of a *lettre de cachet*, judged it prudent to leave France, and come over to England.

On his arrival in this country, Emsley, the bookseller, published his tract, under the title of " Memoire of Count Mirabeau, suppressed the very moment it was published, by the private orders (injunction) of the Keeper of the Seals: printed a second time, out of respect to the King, and justice; together with a conversation between the Keeper of the Seals and Count Mirabeau, upon this subject."—EDITOR.

LETTER LV.

Hardy's Acquittal—Britons Rule the Waves—Insolence of Counsel, and Duty of Judges—Hirelings of the Press, and Hirelings of the Bar—Admiration of the English Mode of administering Justice, and Resolution to effect an Alteration in the Manner of trying Criminals in France—a Rickety *Pun.*

London.

THE trial has terminated by the acquittal of Hardy; and I am glad of it, although the man has behaved with deep ingratitude towards me. It would have pained me to the soul had he become a victim to the sanguinary laws of this country; for, had a verdict been found against him, he would, to make use of a strange phrase—for these nautical islanders are eternally reminding one that they "rule the waves"—he would have been, as they say, "*launched into eternity.*"

The examination and cross questions sadly annoyed poor Henrietta and myself. I experienced no little degree of vexation by the insolent behaviour of Hardy's counsel, who attempted to impugn my veracity. The judge, when addressing me, kindly took notice of the fact.*

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* Had he known all, *Monsieur le Comte* would have thought himself extremely fortunate: he seems to have been let off very easily. No honest witness ought, for a moment, to submit to the insolence of a cross examining, impudent, bullying barrister, whose object (having received his *hire*) frequently, is less to discover the truth, than to display his own ingenuity, to make the worse appear the better reason, to gain the *cause* for his client, *right or wrong*, no matter what injury the *cause of justice* may sustain. A case in point—one amongst ten thousand—is fresh in the recollection of the writer of this note. Only a few years since, a young gentleman, now a distinguished professor of mathematics at one of the universities, was in the witness-box, as a principal evidence in a civil cause of great importance to one of his relations. So completely "*bothered*" was he, by the cross-examining counsel, that, to a most simple question, of the merits of which he was clearly and

This event will have its proper effect upon me—I will move heaven and earth, when I return, to alter our mode of trying criminals.

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perfectly cognisant, not one word could he answer; and consequently, in defiance of right, the cause was lost. The instant that a witness finds an attempt made, by a cross-examining counsel, to confuse or brow-beat him, let him appeal to the Court, the bounden duty of which it is to protect him. By many of these gentry, women—respectable, delicate, timid women—are regarded as fine game.

One word more:—in cases of prosecution for libel, counsel are often heard declaiming furiously, with stentorian lungs, making the walls of the court resound with the words—"*Hirelings of the Press!*" What is a *hireling?* Does it never occur to these gentlemen, that there are *honest* as well as *dishonest* hirelings? The *labourer* is *worthy* of his *hire.* And are not these gentleman themselves *hirelings—hirelings*, too, who receive their *hire* before they perform their *labour!* What, in particular, is a *hireling* of the *press?* He *may*, or he *may not* be—in most instances, probably, he *is*—an *honest* man, *honestly* advocating what he believes to be a *just* and *honest* cause; and such, confessedly, is the indefinite nature of the *law of libel*, that the most *honest*, the most *virtuous*, the most *loyal*, the most

This was the first time that a French culprit had appeared before an English tribunal since the peace; and each seemed to vie, one with another, to show me, "that justice, in this country, is always administered to the admiration of the world, in such a way as to extort approbation even from the prisoners themselves."

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patriotic writer in existence, may unintentionally—unconsciously—fall into its meshes. And what is a *hireling* of the *bar?* It is one of the fictions of the law—and every person of common sense is aware that it is *merely* a fiction—that a counsel, when he goes into court, knows nothing of the cause which he has been *hired* to undertake, beyond what is stated in his brief. Too often this *fiction* is a gross *falsehood.* Too often does a counsel go into court, possessing a perfect knowledge that the cause which he is about to advocate is a *rotten* one; that his client is a *scoundrel;* and that, should he, by quirk, quibble, or impudence, succeed in gaining the day, he may be the ruin of a *just, honest,* and *honourable* man. Which, then, is the viler—the more demoralised and demoralising character of the two—the *hireling* of the *bar,* or the *hireling* of the *press?* —EDITOR.

This affair, unpleasant to me, but which shall prove of advantage to my countrymen at a future day—*Deo volente*—has made some noise in the higher circles; and it appeared of sufficient importance to a printer to cause him to send a reporter, who took the trial down almost *verbatim*, for the edification or entertainment of the public. I heard it cried about the streets two days afterwards. My friend, Sir Gilbert Elliot, told me, that he heard a man prefacing the sale of it in this manner:—"Here's the full account of the trial of Mounseer Hardy, the principal secretary of a French nobleman, the Count *Rickety Mire-a-bow*, who was sent to a dungeon six different times by the king of France, because he said that the Frenchmen have no liberty: Huzza! huzza!" cried *Jaques Rosbif*, "Long live old Rickety!" And, what with liberty, Mounseer, and old Rickety, the ambulating Mercury sold a great many "*full accounts*."

This, of course, was a joke of my friend, Sir Gilbert's,* at my expense; as it was all but impossible that the bawling hawker could have known that my name is *Riquetti*.†

M.

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* Sir Gilbert Elliot, it may be recollected, was, in 1795, appointed viceroy of the kingdom of Corsica; on his return from which, in 1797, he was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Minto, of Minto, in the county of Roxburgh. At a later period of life, he was nominated governor-general of Bengal; and after his return from India, he was, in 1813, advanced to the dignity of Viscount Melgund and Earl of Minto. His Lordship died in 1814, and was succeeded by his eldest son, the present Earl of Minto.—Ed.

† Honoré Gabriel Riquetti Mirabeau.—Ed.

APPENDIX A.

Speeches of the Right Honourable the Earl of Chatham, in the Years 1775 *and* 1777, *on the Affairs of America.*

House of Lords, Jan. 20, 1775.

THE Earl of Dartmouth, then Secretary of State for America, produced the official American papers.

The Earl of Chatham, after strongly inveighing against the dilatoriness of Administration, &c., proceeded as follows:—

"But as I have not the honour of access to his Majesty, I will endeavour to transmit to him, through the constitutional channel of this House, my ideas of America, to rescue him from the misadvice of his present Ministers. I congratulate your Lordships that the business is *at last* entered upon, by the Noble Lord's

laying the papers before you. As I suppose your Lordships too well apprised of their contents, I hope I am not premature, in submitting to you my present motion:

"'That an humble Address be presented to his 'Majesty, humbly to desire and beseech his Majesty, that, in order to open the way towards a happy settlement of the dangerous troubles in America, by beginning to allay ferments and soften animosities there; 'and, above all, for preventing in the mean time any 'sudden and fatal catastrophe at Boston, now suffering 'under the daily irritation of an army before their 'eyes, posted in their town,—it may graciously please 'his Majesty that immediate orders may be dispatched 'to General Gage, for removing his Majesty's forces 'from the town of Boston as soon as the rigour of the 'season, and other circumstances indispensable to the 'safety and accommodation of the said troops, may render the same practicable.'"

"I wish, my Lords, not to lose a day in this urgent, pressing crisis; an hour now lost, in allaying the ferment in America, may produce years of calamity; for my own part, I will not desert for a moment the conduct of this mighty business, from the first to the last; unless nailed to my bed by the extremity of sickness, I will give it unremitted attention; I will knock at the door of this sleeping and confounded Ministry, and will rouse them to a sense of their important danger.

"When I state the importance of the Colonies to this country, and the magnitude of danger hanging over this

country from the present plan of misadministration practised against them, I desire not to be understood to argue a reciprocity of indulgence between England and America. I contend not for indulgence, but justice, to America: and I shall ever contend that the Americans justly owe obedience to us in a limited degree:—they owe obedience to our ordinances of trade and navigation; but let the line be skilfully drawn between the objects of those ordinances and their private internal property; let the sacredness of their property remain inviolate; let it be taxable only by their own consent, given in their provincial assemblies;—else, *it will cease to be property.* As to the metaphysical refinements, attempting to shew that the Americans are equally free from obedience and commercial restraints, as from taxation for revenue, as being unrepresented here,—I pronounce them futile, frivolous, and groundless.

"When I urge this measure of recalling the troops from Boston, I urge it on this pressing principle, that it is necessarily preparatory to the restoration of your peace, and the establishment of your prosperity. It will then appear that you are disposed to treat amicably and equitably; and to consider, revise, and repeal, if it shall be found necessary, as I affirm it will be, those violent acts and declarations which have disseminated confusion throughout your empire.

"Resistance to your acts was necessary as it was just; and your vain declarations of the omnipotence of parliament, and your imperious doctrines of the necessity

of submission, will be found equally impotent to convince or enslave your fellow subjects in America; who feel the tyranny, whether *ambitioned* by an individual part of the legislature, or the bodies who compose it, equally intolerable to British subjects.

"The means of enforcing this thraldom are found to be as ridiculous and weak in practice, as they are unjust in principle. Indeed I cannot but feel the most anxious sensibility for the situation of General Gage, and the troops under his command; thinking him, as I do, a man of understanding and humanity; and entertaining, as I ever will, the highest respect, the warmest love, for the British troops. Their situation is truly unworthy; penned up—pining in inglorious inactivity. They are an army of impotence. You may call them an army of safety and of guard; but they are, in truth, an army of impotence and contempt; and, to make the folly equal to the disgrace, they are an army of irritation and vexation. But I find a report *creeping* abroad, that the Ministers censure General Gage's inactivity; let *them* censure him—it becomes them—it becomes their *justice* and their *honour:* I mean not to censure his inactivity; it is prudent and necessary inaction; but it is a miserable condition, where disgrace is prudence, and where it is necessary to be contemptible. This tameness, however contemptible, cannot be censured; for the first drop of blood shed in civil and unnatural war, might be *immedicabile vulnus.*

"I therefore urge and conjure your Lordships imme-

diately to adopt this conciliating measure;—I will pledge myself for its immediately producing conciliatory effects, by its being thus well timed; but if you delay till your vain hope shall be accomplished, of triumphantly dictating reconciliation, you delay for ever. But admitting that this hope, which in truth is desperate, should be accomplished, what do you gain by the imposition of your victorious amity?—you will be untrusted and unthanked. Adopt, then, the grace, while you have the opportunity of reconcilement; or, at least, prepare the way. Allay the ferment prevailing in America, by removing the obnoxious hostile cause,—obnoxious and unserviceable; for their merit can only be in inaction. '*Non dimicare et vincere:*' their victory can never be by exertions. Their force would be most disproportionately exerted against a brave, generous, and united people, with arms in their hands;—three millions of people, the genuine descendants of a valiant and pious ancestry, driven to those deserts by the narrow maxims of a superstitious tyranny. And is the spirit of persecution never to be appeased? Are the brave sons of those brave forefathers to inherit their sufferings, as they have inherited their virtues? Are they to sustain the infliction of the most oppressive and unexampled severity, beyond the accounts of history or description of poetry? "*Rhadamanthus habet durissima regna, castigatque,* AUDITQUE;" so says the wisest poet, and perhaps the wisest statesman and politician: but our ministers say, the Americans *must not be heard.* They

have been condemned *unheard*; the indiscriminating hand of vengeance has lumped together innocent and guilty; with all the formalities of hostility has blocked up the town, and reduced to beggary and famine thirty thousand inhabitants.

"But his Majesty is advised, that the union in America cannot last. Ministers have more eyes than I, and should have more ears; but from all the information I have been able to procure, I can pronounce it, a union, solid, permanent, and effectual. Ministers may satisfy themselves and delude the public with the report of what they call commercial bodies, in America. They are *not* commercial: — they are your packers and factors; they live upon nothing— for I call commission nothing; I mean the ministerial *authority* for this American intelligence; the runners for government who are paid for their intelligence. But these are not the men, nor this the influence, to be considered in America, when we estimate the firmness of their union. Even to extend the question, and to take in the really mercantile circle, will be totally inadequate to the consideration. Trade, indeed, increases the glory and wealth of a country; but its real wealth and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land: in their simplicity of life is found the simpleness of virtue, the integrity and courage of freedom. These true genuine sons of the earth are invincible: and they surround and hem in the mercantile bodies; even if these bodies, which suppo-

sition I totally disclaim, could be supposed to be disaffected to the cause of liberty. Of this general spirit existing in the American *nation*—for so I wish to distinguish the real and genuine Americans from the pseudo traders I have described—of this spirit of independence animating the *nation* of America, I have the most authentic information: it is not new among them; it is, and has ever been, their established principle, their confirmed persuasion; it is their nature and their doctrine.

"I remember, some years ago, when the stamp act was in agitation, conversing, in a friendly confidence, with a person of undoubted respect and authenticity on that subject; and he assured me with a certainty which his judgment and opportunity gave him, that these were the prevalent and steady principles of America. That you might destroy their towns and cut them off from the superfluities, perhaps the conveniences, of life; but that they were prepared to despise your power, and would not lament their loss, whilst they have—what, my lords?—their *woods* and their *liberty*. The name of my authority, if I am called upon, will authenticate the opinion irrefragably.

"If illegal violence have been, as it is said, committed in America, prepare the way, open the door of possibility for acknowledgment and satisfaction; but proceed not to such coercion, such proscription; cease your indiscriminate inflictions; amerce not thirty thousand, oppress not three millions, for the fault of forty

or fifty! Such severity of injustice must for ever render incurable the wounds you have already given your colonies;—you irritate them to unappeasable rancour. What though you march from town to town, and from province to province; though you should be able to enforce a temporary and local submission—which, I only suppose, not admit—how shall you be able to secure the obedience of the country you leave behind you in your progress? to grasp the dominion of eighteen hundred miles of continent, populous in valour, liberty, and resistance!

"This resistance to your arbitrary system of taxation might have been foreseen; it was obvious from the nature of things, and of mankind; and, above all, from the whiggish spirit flourishing in that country. The spirit which now resists your taxation in America is the same which formerly opposed loans, benevolences, and shipmoney, in England,—the same spirit which called all England *on its legs*, and by the bill of rights vindicated the English constitution,—the same principle which established the great, fundamental, essential maxim of our liberties, *that no subject of England shall be taxed but by his own consent.*

"This glorious spirit of whiggism animates three millions in America, who prefer poverty with liberty, to gilded chains and sordid affluence, and who will die in defence of their rights as men, as freemen. What shall oppose this spirit, aided by the congenial flame glowing in the breasts of every whig in England, to the amount,

I hope, of double the American numbers? Ireland they have to a man. In that country, joined as it is with the cause of the Colonies, and placed at their head, the distinction I contend for is and must be observed. This country superintends and controuls their trade and navigation; but they *tax themselves*. And this distinction between external and internal controul is sacred and insurmountable; it is involved in the abstract nature of things. Property is private, individual, absolute: trade is an extended and complicated consideration; it reaches as far as ships can sail, or winds can blow; it is a great and various machine. To regulate the numberless movements of its several parts, and combine them into effect, for the good of the whole, requires the superintending wisdom and energy of the supreme power in the empire. But this supreme power has no effect towards internal taxation, for it does not exist in that relation;—there is no such thing, *no such idea in this constitution as a supreme power operating upon property*. Let this distinction then remain for ever ascertained; taxation is theirs, commercial regulation is ours. As an American, I would recognise to England her supreme right of regulating commerce and navigation; as an Englishman by birth and principle, I recognise to the Americans their supreme unalienable right in their property,—a right which they are justified in the defence of to the last extremity. To maintain this principle is the common cause of the whigs on the other side of the Atlantic, and on this, 'tis liberty to liberty

engaged,' that they will defend themselves, their families, and their country. In this great cause they are immoveably allied: it is the alliance of God and nature,—immutable, eternal,—fixed as the firmament of heaven!

"To such united force, what force shall be opposed? What, my Lords? A few regiments in America, and seventeen or eighteen thousand men at home! The idea is too ridiculous to take up a moment of your Lordships' time. Nor can such a national and principled union be resisted by the tricks of office or ministerial manœuvre. Laying of papers on your table, or counting noses on a division, will not avert or postpone the hour of danger: it must arrive, my Lords, unless these fatal acts are done away; it must arrive, in all its horrors; and then these boastful ministers, spite of all their confidence, and all their manœuvres, shall be forced to hide their heads. They shall be forced to a disgraceful abandonment of their present measures and principles,—principles which they avow, but cannot defend,—measures which they presume to attempt, but cannot hope to effectuate. They cannot, my Lords, they cannot stir a step,—they have not a *move* left,—they are *check-mated.*

"But it is not repealing this act of parliament, or that act of parliament; it is not repealing a *piece of parchment* that can restore America to our bosom; you must repeal her fears and her resentment; and you may hope for her love and gratitude. But now, insulted with an armed force posted at Boston; irritated with a hostile array before her eyes; her concessions, if you *could* force

them, would be suspicious and insecure; they will be *irato animo;* they will not be sound, honourable, pactions of freemen; they will be dictates of fear, and extortions of force. But it is more than evident, that you cannot force them, principled and united as they are, to your unworthy terms of submission—it is impossible; for when I hear General Gage censured for inactivity, I must retort with indignation on those intemperate measures, which have betrayed him into his present situation. His situation reminds me, my Lords, of the answer of a French general in the civil wars of France, Monsieur Condé, opposed to Monsieur Turenne. He was asked, how it happened that he did not take his adversary prisoner, as he was often very near him: "J'ai peur," replied Condé, very honestly, "J'ai peur qu'il ne me prenne;" I'm afraid he'll take me.

"When your Lordships look at the papers transmitted us from America; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom; you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow, that in all my reading and observation—and it has been my favourite study; I have read Thucidydes, and have studied and admired the master states of the world—that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, in such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your Lordships, that all attempts to impose servitude upon such men, to

establish despotism over such a mighty continental *nation*, must be vain, must be fatal. We shall be *forced ultimately to retract;* let us retract while we can, not when we must. I say we must necessarily undo these violent oppressive acts: *they must be repealed; you will repeal them; I pledge myself for it, that you will in the end repeal them; I stake my reputation on it; I will consent to be taken for an idiot, if they are not finally repealed.* Avoid then this humiliating, disgraceful, necessity. With a dignity becoming your exalted situation, make the first advances to concord, peace, and happiness; for *that* is your true dignity, to act with prudence and with justice. That *you* should first concede, is obvious from sound and rational policy. Concession comes with better grace, and more salutary effect from the superior power; it reconciles superiority of power with the feelings of men, and establishes solid confidence on the foundations of affection and gratitude.

"So thought a wise poet and a wise man in political sagacity; the friend of Mecænas, and the eulogist of Augustus. To him, the adopted son and successor of the first Cæsar,—to him, the master of the world, he wisely urged this conduct of prudence and dignity,—'*Tuque prior tu parce; projice tela manu.*'

"Every motive, therefore, of justice and of policy, of dignity and of prudence, urges you to allay the ferment in America, by a repeal of your acts of parliament, by a removal of your troops from Boston, and by demonstration of amicable dispositions towards your Colo-

nies. On the other hand, every danger and every hazard impends to deter you from perseverance in your present ruinous measures. Foreign war hanging over your heads by a slight and brittle thread—France and Spain watching your conduct, and waiting for the maturity of your errors, with a vigilant eye to America, and the temper of your Colonies, more than to their own concerns, be they what they may.

"To conclude, my Lords; if the Ministers thus persevere in misadvising and misleading the King, I will not say that they *can* alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown; but I will affirm *that they will make the crown not worth his wearing*. I will not say that the King is betrayed, but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone."

House of Lords, Nov. 20, 1777.

His Majesty opened the Session with the following most gracious speech from the throne:—

"My Lords and Gentlemen.

"It is a great satisfaction to me that I can have recourse to the wisdom and support of my Parliament, in this conjuncture, when the continuance of the rebellion in North America demands our most serious attention. The powers which you have entrusted me with, for the suppression of this revolt, have been most faithfully exerted; and I have a just confidence that the conduct and courage of my officers, and the spirit and intrepidity

of my forces both by sea and land, will, under the blessing of Divine Providence, be attended with success. But as I am persuaded that you will see the necessity of preparing for such further operations as the contingencies of the war, and the obstinacy of the rebels, may render expedient, I am for that purpose pursuing the proper measures for keeping my land forces complete to their present establishment; and if I should have occasion to increase them, by contracting any new engagements, I rely on your zeal and public spirit to enable me to make them good.

"I have received repeated assurances from foreign powers of their pacific dispositions; my own cannot be doubted: but at this time, when the armaments in the ports of France and Spain continue, I have thought it advisable to make a considerable augmentation to my naval force; as well to keep my kingdoms in a respectable state of security as to provide an adequate protection for the extensive commerce of my subjects. And as on the one hand I am determined that the peace of Europe shall not be disturbed by me, so, on the other, I will always be a faithful guardian of the honour of the crown of Great Britain.

"Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

"I have ordered the estimates for the ensuing year to be laid before you. The various services which I have mentioned to you will unavoidably require large supplies: and nothing could relieve my mind from the concern which I feel for the heavy charge which they

must bring on my faithful people, but the perfect conviction that they are necessary for the welfare and essential interests of my kingdoms.

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" I will steadily pursue the measures in which we are engaged, for the re-establishment of that constitutional subordination which, with the blessing of God, I will maintain through the several parts of my dominions. But I shall ever be watchful for an opportunity of putting a stop to the effusion of the blood of my subjects, and the calamities which are inseparable from a state of war. And I still hope that the deluded and unhappy multitude will return to their allegiance; and that the remembrance of what they once enjoyed, the regret for what they have lost, and the feelings of what they now suffer, under the arbitrary tyranny of their leaders, will rekindle in their hearts a spirit of loyalty to their sovereign, and of attachment to their mother-country; and that they will enable me, with the concurrence and support of my parliament, to accomplish what I shall consider as the greatest happiness of my life, and the greatest glory of my reign, the restoration of peace, order, and confidence, to my American colonies."

In answer to his Majesty's most gracious speech, Lord Percy moved their Lordships to concur in an address in the following terms:—

" That they, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament

assembled, beg leave to return his Majesty their humble thanks for his most gracious speech from the throne.

"To offer their congratulations to his Majesty on the increase of his domestic happiness, by the birth of another princess, and the recovery of his royal consort, who is most highly endeared to this nation; as well by her Majesty's eminent and amiable virtues, as by every new pledge of security to our religious and civil liberties.

"That they are duly sensible of his Majesty's goodness, in recurring to the advice and support of his Parliament in the present conjuncture, when the rebellion in North America still continues; and to return his Majesty their unfeigned thanks for having communicated to them the just confidence which his Majesty reposes in the zeal, intrepidity and exertions of his Majesty's officers and forces both by sea and land: but, at the same time, that they entertain a well-founded hope of the important successes, which, under the blessing of Providence, may be expected. That they cannot but applaud his Majesty's unwearied vigilance and wisdom, in recommending them to prepare, at all events, for such further operations as the contingencies of the war, and the obstinacy of the rebels, may render expedient. That they are therefore gratefully sensible of his Majesty's consideration, in pursuing the measures necessary to keep his land forces complete to the present establishment; and that they owe it both to his

Majesty and themselves to say, that they shall cheerfully concur in enabling his Majesty to make good such new engagements with foreign powers, for the augmentation of the auxiliary troops, as the weighty motives his Majesty has stated, may induce him to contract.

"That it is with great satisfaction they learn, that his Majesty receives repeated assurances from foreign powers of their pacific dispositions; and that, with hearts full of gratitude and admiration, they acknowledge his Majesty's humane, steady, and dignified conduct, which is equally well calculated to demonstrate to the world his Majesty's wish to preserve the general tranquillity of Europe, and his determination to maintain the honour of the Crown, the security of these kingdoms, and the commercial interests of his subjects.

"That they thankfully receive his Majesty's declaration of perseverance now pursuing, for the re-establishment of a just and constitutional subordination through the several parts of his Majesty's dominions; and beg leave to assure his Majesty, that they participate the desire which at the same time animates his royal breast; to see a proper opportunity for putting an end to the effusion of blood, and the various calamities inseparable from a state of war; that the constant tenor of his Majesty's reign has shewn, that his whole attention is employed for the safety and happiness of all his people; and, that whenever their unhappy fellow-subjects in North America shall duly return to their allegiance, they shall readily concur in every wise and

salutary measure which can contribute to restore confidence and order, and to fix the mutual welfare of Great Britain and her colonies, on the most solid and permanent foundations."

Lord Chatham.—"I rise, my Lords, to declare my sentiments on this most solemn and serious subject. It has imposed a load upon my mind, which I fear nothing can remove; but which impels me to endeavour its alleviation, by a free and unreserved communication of my sentiments.

"In the first part of the address, I have the honour of heartily concurring with the noble earl who moved it. No man feels sincerer joy than I do, none can offer more genuine congratulation on every accession of strength to the Protestant succession; I therefore join in every congratulation on the birth of another princess, and the happy recovery of her Majesty. But I must stop here—my courtly complaisance will carry me no farther; I will not join in congratulation on misfortune and disgrace; I cannot concur in a blind and servile address, which approves and endeavours to sanctify the monstrous measures that have heaped disgrace and misfortune upon us—that have brought ruin to our doors. This, my Lords, is a perilous and tremulous moment! It is not a time for adulation, the smoothness of flattery cannot now avail—cannot save us in this awful and rugged crisis;—it is now necessary to instruct the throne in the language of truth—we must dispel the delusion and the darkness

which envelope it, and display, in its full danger and true colours, the ruin that is brought to our doors.

" This, my Lords, is our duty, it is the proper function of this noble assembly, sitting as we do upon our honours in this House, the hereditary council of the Crown. And *who* is the minister—where is the minister, that has dared to suggest to the throne the contrary, unconstitutional language, this day delivered from it? The accustomed language from the throne has been application to parliament for advice and assistance: as it is the right of parliament to give, so is it the duty of the Crown to ask it; but on this day, and in this extreme momentous exigency, no reliance is reposed on our constitutional councils—no advice is asked from the sober and enlightened care of parliament; but the Crown, from itself and by itself, declares an unalterable determination to pursue measures—and what measures, my Lords?—the measures that have produced the imminent perils that threaten us, the measures that have brought ruin to our doors.

" Can the minister of the day now presume to expect a continuance of support in the ruinous infatuation? Can parliament be so dead to its dignity, and its duty, as to be thus deluded into the loss of the one and the violation of the other? To give an unlimited credit and support, for the *steady* perseverance in measures; *that* is the word and the conduct, not proposed for our parliamentary advice, but dictated and forced upon us—in measures, I say, my Lords, which have reduced this

late flourishing empire, to ruin and contempt! '*But yesterday, and England might have stood against the world —now none so poor to do her reverence.*' I use the words of a poet; but though it be poetry, it is not fiction. It is a shameful truth, that not alone the power and strength of this country are wasting and expiring, but her well-earned glories, her true honour and substantial dignity are sacrificed. France, my Lords, has insulted you; she has encouraged and sustained America: and whether America be wrong or right, the dignity of this country ought to spurn at the officious insult of French interference. The ministers and ambassadors of those who are called rebels and enemies, are in Paris. In Paris they transact the reciprocal interests of America and France. Can there be a more mortifying insult? Can even our ministers sustain a more humiliating disgrace? Do they dare to resent it? Do they presume even to hint a vindication of their honour, and the dignity of the state, by requiring the dismissal of the plenipotentiaries of America? Such is the degradation to which they have reduced the glories of England! The people whom they affected to call contemptible rebels, but whose growing power has at last obtained the name of enemies;—the people with whom they have engaged this country in war, and against whom they now command our implicit support in every measure of desperate hostility;—this people, despised as rebels, acknowledged as enemies, are abetted against us, supplied with every military store,

their interests consulted, and their ambassadors entertained, by your inveterate enemy—and our ministers dare not interpose with dignity or effect. Is this the honour of a great kingdom? Is this the indignant spirit of England, who, 'but yesterday,' gave law to the house of Bourbon? My Lords, the dignity of nations demands a decisive conduct in a situation like this. Even when the greatest prince, that perhaps this country ever saw, filled our throne, the requisition of a Spanish general, on a similar subject, was attended to, and complied with; for, on the spirited remonstrance of the Duke of Alva, Elizabeth found herself obliged to deny the Flemish exiles all countenance, support, or even entrance into her dominions; and the Count le Marque, with his few desperate followers, was expelled the kingdom:—happening to arrive at the Brille, and finding it weak in defence, they made themselves masters of the place; and this was the foundation of the United Provinces.

"My Lords, this ruinous and ignominious situation, where we cannot act with success, nor suffer with honour, calls upon us to remonstrate, in the strongest and loudest language of truth, to rescue the ear of his Majesty from the delusions which surround it. The desperate state of our arms abroad is in part known.—No man thinks more highly of them than I do. I love and honour the English troops; I know their virtues and their valour; I know they can achieve any thing—except impossibilities; and I know that the conquest of English Ame-

rica *is an impossibility*. You cannot, I venture to say, YOU CANNOT conquer America. Your armies last war effected every thing that could be effected; and what was it? It cost a numerous army, under the command of a most able general, now a Lord in this House, a long and laborious campaign to expel five thousand Frenchmen from America.—My Lords, YOU CANNOT CONQUER AMERICA. What is your present situation there? We do not know the worst; but we know that in three campaigns we have done nothing, and suffered much. Besides, the sufferings, perhaps *total loss* of the northern force.* The best appointed army that ever took the field, commanded by Sir William Howe, has retired from the American lines; he was obliged to relinquish his attempt; and, with great delay and danger, to adopt a new and distant plan of operations. We shall soon know, and in any event have reason to lament, what may have happened since. As to conquest, therefore, my Lords, I repeat, it is impossible. You may swell every expense and every effort still more extravagantly; pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and barter with every little pitiful German prince, that sells his subjects to the shambles of a

* General Burgoyne's army. The history of it is short. Most of its brave officers fell, and above half its numbers: the rest surrendered to the enemy on the 17th of October, 1777. See the Gazettes. The account of this *total loss*, as the noble speaker expresses it, on the 20th of November, arrived in England in the beginning of December.

foreign prince; your efforts are for ever vain and impotent; doubly so from this mercenary aid on which you rely; for it irritates to an incurable resentment the minds of your enemies. To overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty! If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never—never—never!

"Your own army is infected with the contagion of these illiberal allies.—The spirit of plunder and of rapine is gone forth among them.—I know it—and notwithstanding what the noble Earl,* who moved the address, has given as his opinion of our American army, I know, from authentic information, and the *most experienced officers*, that our discipline is deeply wounded. Whilst this is notoriously our sinking situation, America grows and flourishes: whilst our strength and discipline is lowered, theirs rises and improves.

But, my Lords, who is the man, that, in addition to these disgraces and mischiefs of our army, has dared to authorize, and associate to our arms, the tomahawk and scalping-knife of the savage? To call into civilized alliance, the wild and inhuman savage of the woods; to delegate to the merciless Indians the defence of disputed rights; and to wage the horrors of his barbarous war against our brethren? My Lords, these enor-

* Lord Percy.

mities cry aloud for redress and punishment: unless thoroughly done away, it will be a stain on the national character—it is a violation of the constitution—I believe it is against law. It is not the least of our national misfortunes, that the strength and character of our army are thus impaired; infected with the mercenary spirit of robbery and rapine—familiarized to the horrid scenes of savage cruelty—it can no longer boast of the noble and generous principles which dignify a soldier; no longer sympathise with the dignity of the royal banner, nor feel the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war—'that make ambition virtue!' What makes ambition virtue? The sense of honour. But is the sense of honour consistent with a spirit of plunder, or the practice of murder? Besides these murderers and plunderers, let me ask our Ministers, what other allies have they acquired? what *other powers* have they associated to their cause? Have they entered into alliance with *the king of the gipsies?* Nothing, my Lords, is too low, or too ludicrous, to be consistent with their counsels.

"The independent views of America have been stated and asserted as the foundation of this address. My Lords, no man wishes more for the due dependence of America on this country than I do. To preserve it, and not to confirm that state of independence into which *your measures* have hitherto *driven* them, is the object we ought to unite in obtaining. The Americans, contending for their rights against arbitrary exactions, I

love and admire; it is the struggle of free and virtuous patriots:—but contending for independency and total disconnection from England, as an Englishman, I cannot wish them success; for, in a due constitutional dependency, including the ancient supremacy of this country in regulating their commerce and navigation, consists the mutual happiness and prosperity both of England and America. She derived assistance and protection from us, and we reaped from her the most important advantages: she was, indeed, the fountain of our wealth, the nerve of our strength, the nursery and basis of our naval power. It is our duty, therefore, my Lords, if we wish to save our country, most seriously to endeavour to recover these most beneficial subjects; and this perilous crisis, perhaps, may be the only case in which we can hope for success; for, in their negociations with France, they have, or think they have, reason to complain. Though it be notorious, that they have received from that power important supplies, and assistance of various kinds, yet it is certain they expected it in a more decisive and immediate degree. America is in ill-humour with France, on some points that have not entirely answered her expectations; let us wisely take advantage of every possible moment of reconciliation. Besides, the natural disposition of America herself still leans towards England, to the old habits of connection and mutual interest that united both countries; this *was* the established sentiment of all the continent: and still, my Lords, in the great and

principal part, the sound part of America, this wise and affectionate disposition prevails; and there is a very considerable part of America yet sound—the middle and the southern provinces. Some parts may be factious, and blind to their true interests; but if we express a wise and benevolent disposition to communicate with them those immutable rights of nature, and those constitutional liberties, to which they are equally entitled with ourselves,—by a conduct so just and humane, we shall confirm the favourable, and conciliate the adverse. I say, my Lords, the rights and liberties to which they are equally entitled with ourselves, but no more. I would participate to them every enjoyment and freedom, which the colonizing subjects of a free state can possess; and I do not see why they should not enjoy every fundamental right in their property, and every original substantial liberty, which Devonshire, or Surrey, or the county I live in, or any other county in England can claim; reserving, always, as the sacred right of the mother country, the due constitutional dependency of the Colonies. The inherent supremacy of the state, in regulating and protecting the navigation and commerce of all her subjects, is necessary for the mutual benefit and preservation of every part, to constitute and preserve the prosperous arrangement of the whole empire.

The sound parts of America, of which I have spoken, must be sensible of these great truths, and of their real interests. America is not in that state of desperate and

contemptible rebellion, which this country has been deluded to believe. It is not a wild and lawless banditti, who, having nothing to lose, might hope to snatch something from public convulsions. Many of their leaders and great men have a great stake in this great contest. The gentleman who conducts their armies, I am told, has an estate of four or five thousand pounds a year; and when I consider these things, I cannot but lament the inconsiderate violence of our penal acts, our declarations of treason and rebellion, with all the fatal effects of attainder and confiscation.

As to the disposition of foreign powers, which is asserted to be pacific and friendly, let us judge, my Lords, rather by their actions and the nature of things, than by interested assertions. The uniform assistance supplied to America by France, suggests a different conclusion. The most important interests of France, in aggrandizing and enriching herself with what she most wants, supplies of every naval store from America, must inspire her with different sentiments. The extraordinary preparations of the House of Bourbon, by land and sea, from Dunkirk to the Streights, equally ready and willing to overwhelm these defenceless islands, should rouse us to a sense of their real disposition and to our own danger. Not five thousand troops in England!—hardly two thousand in Ireland!—What can we oppose to the combined force of our enemies? Scarcely twenty ships of the line, fully or sufficiently manned, that any admiral's reputation would permit him to take the

command of.* The river of Lisburn in the possession of our enemies!—the seas swept by American privateers: our channel torn to pieces by them!—In this complicated crisis of danger, weakness at home, and calamity abroad, terrified and insulted by the neighbouring powers, unable to act in America, or acting only to be destroyed; where is the man with the forehead to promise or hope for success in such a situation? or, from perseverance in the measures that have driven us to it?—Who has the forehead to do so?—where is that man? I should be glad to see his face.

"You cannot *conciliate* the Americans by your present measures—you cannot *subdue* them by your present or

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* In reply to the noble speaker's assertion, relative to the number of ships, &c., the First Lord of the Admiralty rose in his place; and gave their Lordships *official assurance*, "that *thirty-five* ships of the line were *then* (Nov. 20, 1777) completely ready; that *seven* more would be ready in a few weeks; in all forty-two: and that an admiral of the most acknowledged merit, (he *then* said,) and of the highest reputation, Admiral Keppel, was ready to take the command." In March, 1778, Admiral Keppel went to Portsmouth to take the command. He found "but *six ships* ready," and those in ill condition.—(See defence of Admiral Keppel.) "On the 30th June, *twenty ships* of the line were ready, with which the admiral sailed. *Thirty-two* ships of the line then lay in Brest water, besides an incredible number of frigates."—(*Ibid.*) The English fleet were forced to return, from this vast superiority of this fleet of France.—"A first Lord of the Admiralty, if he does not take care always to have a fleet superior to both France and Spain, *deserves to lose his head.*"—Lord Sandwich.

by any measures. What then can you do? You cannot conquer; you cannot gain; but you can *address;* you can lull the fears and anxieties of the moment into an ignorance of the danger that should produce them. But, my Lords, the time demands the language of truth: we must not now apply the flattering unction of servile compliance or blind complaisance. In a just and necessary war, to maintain the rights or honour of my country, I would strip the shirt from my back to support it; but in such a war as this, unjust in its principle, impracticable in its means, and ruinous in its consequences, I would not contribute a single shilling. I do not call for vengeance on the heads of those who have been guilty; I only recommend to them to make their retreat—let them walk off; and let them make haste, or they may be assured that speedy and condign punishment will overtake them.

"My Lords, I have submitted to you, with the freedom and truth which I think my duty, my sentiments on your present awful situation. I have laid before you the ruin of your power, the decrease of your reputation, the pollution of your discipline, the contamination of your morals, the complication of calamities, foreign and domestic, that overwhelm your sinking country. Your dearest interests, your own liberties, the constitution itself totters to the foundation. All this disgraceful danger, this multitude of misery, is the monstrous offspring of this unnatural war. We have been deceived and deluded too long, but let us now stop short; this

is the crisis, may be the only crisis of time and situation, to give us a possibility of escape from fatal effects of our delusions. But if, in an obstinate and infatuated persevgrance in folly, we meanly echo back the peremptory words of this day presented to us, nothing can save this devoted country from complete and final ruin. We madly rush into multiplied miseries and 'confusion worse confounded.'.

"Is it possible, can it be believed, that ministers are yet blind to this impending destruction? I did hope, that instead of this false and empty vanity, this overweening pride, engendering high conceits, and presumptuous imaginations, that ministers would have humbled themselves in their errors, would have confessed and retracted them, and by an active, though a late, repentance, have endeavoured to redeem them. But, my Lords, since they had neither sagacity to foresee, nor justice nor humanity to shun, these oppressive calamities; since not even severe experience can make them feel, nor the imminent ruin of their country awaken them from their stupefaction, the guardian care of parliament must interpose. I shall, therefore, my Lords, propose to you an amendment to the address to his Majesty, to be inserted immediately after the two first paragraphs of congratulation on the birth of a princess:—to recommend an immediate cessation of hostilities, and the commencement of a treaty to restore peace and liberty to America, strength and happiness to England, security and permanent prosperity to both

countries. This, my Lords, is yet in our power; and let not the wisdom and justice of your Lordships neglect the happy and perhaps the only opportunity. By the establishment of irrevocable laws, founded on mutual rights, and ascertained by treaty, these glorious enjoyments may be firmly perpetuated. And let me repeat to your Lordships, that the strong bias of America, at least of the wiser and sounder parts of it, naturally inclines to this happy and constitutional reconnection with you. Notwithstanding the temporary intrigues with France, we may still be assured of their ancient and confirmed partiality to us. America and France cannot be congenial; there is something decisive and confirmed in the honest American that will not assimilate to the futility and levity of Frenchmen."

APPENDIX B.*

Synopsis of a New Code of Criminal Law, submitted to the Emperor of Austria, by Monsieur Wormster.

The criminal judge should be intent on observing the just proportion between a criminal offence and the punishment assigned to it, and carefully to compare every circumstance.

With respect to the criminal offence, his principal attention should be directed to the degree of malignity accompanying the bad action,—to the importance of the circumstance connected with the offence—to the degree of damage that may result from it,—to the possibility or impossibility of the precautions which might have been made use of to prevent it.

With respect to the criminal, the attention of the judge should be directed to his youth,—to the temptation of imprudence attending it,—to the punishment which has been inflicted for the same offence,—and to the danger of a relapse.

* Vide page 197.

The offences are divided into seven different classes, *viz.*

Criminal Offences.

1. Offences against the sovereign and the state, or high treason.
2. Offences relative to human life and bodily safety.
3. Offences relative to honour and liberty.
4. Offences relative to possessions and rights.

Civil Offences.

5. Offences that endanger the life or health of the citizens.
6. Offences that affect the fortunes or rights of the citizens.
7. Offences that tend to the corruption of morals.

END OF VOL. I.

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